BOOK 12

Asterix

AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

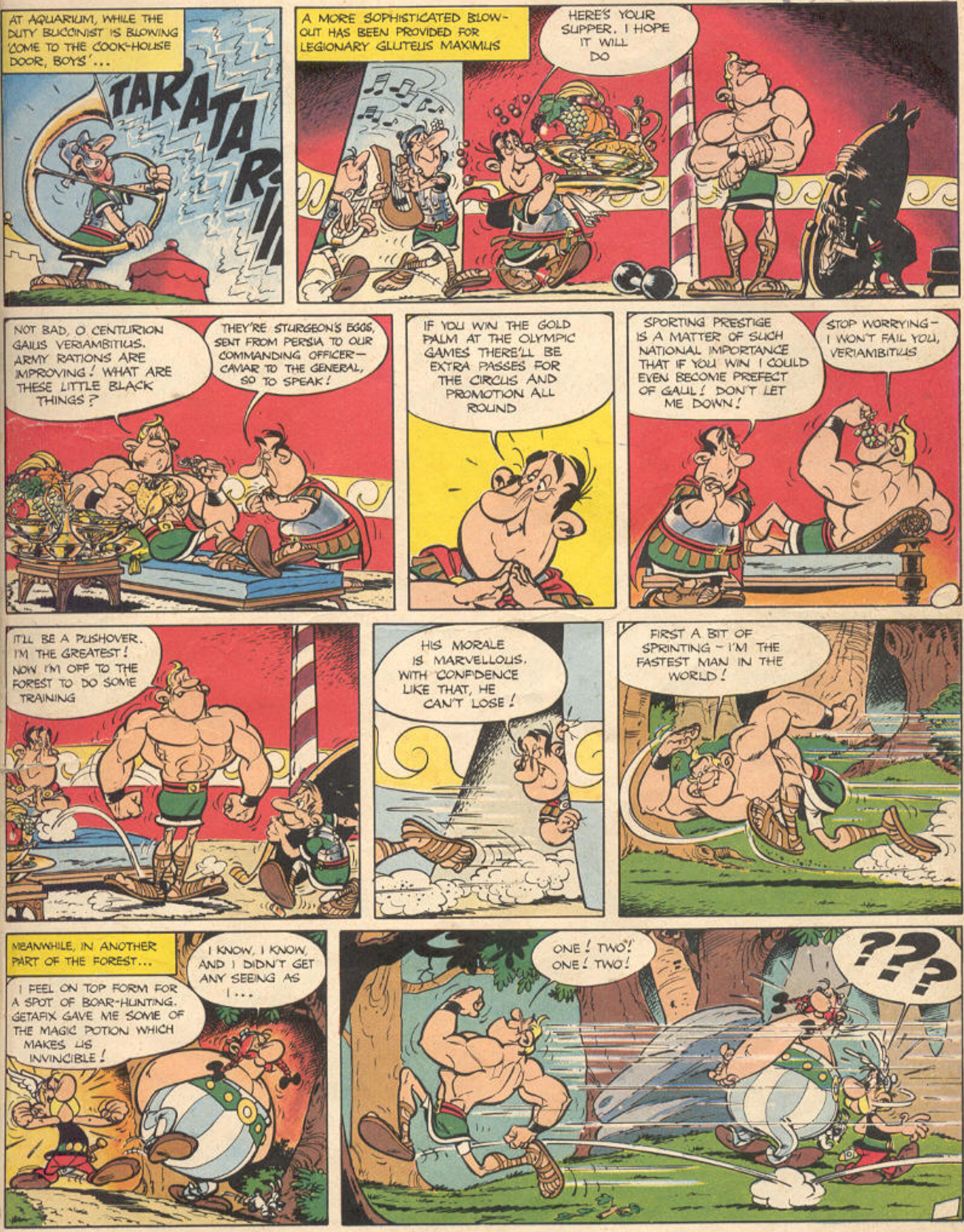
TEXT: GOSCINNY
DRAWINGS: UDERZO



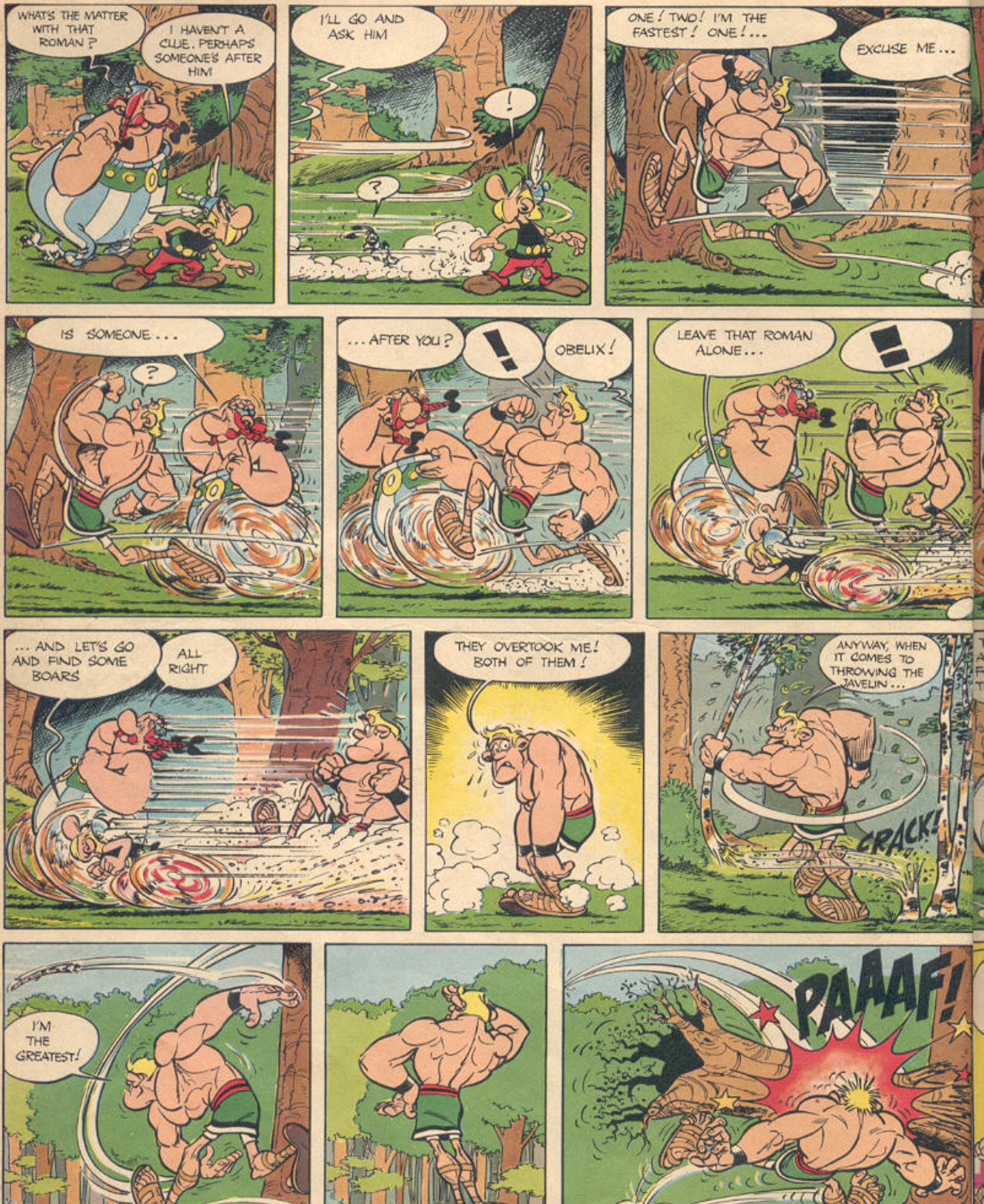
HODDER-DARGAUD

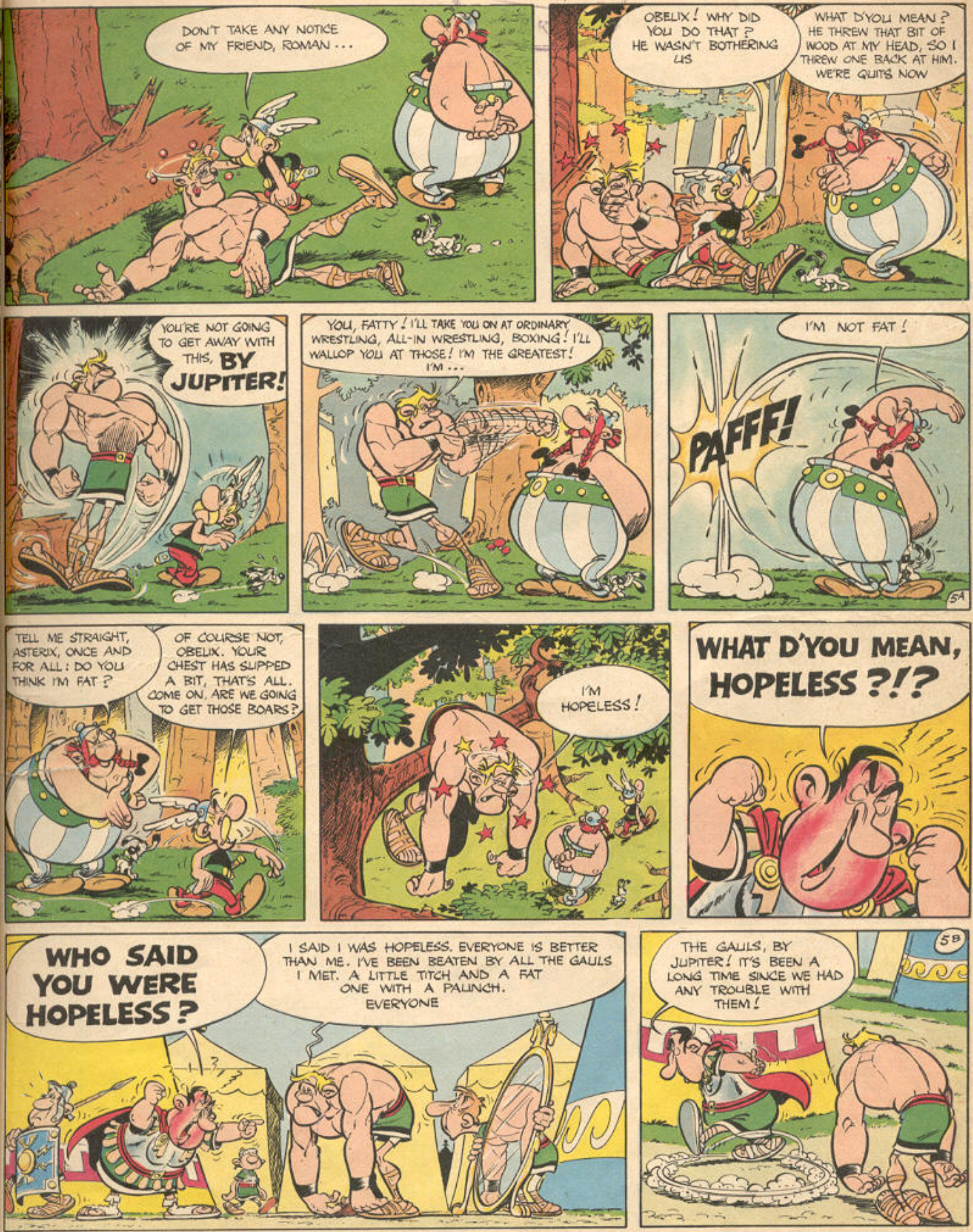

IT IS LATE SPRING, AND EVERYTHING IS PEACEFUL IN THE LITTLE GAULISH VILLAGE WE KNOW SO WELL. OBELIX AND HIS APPRENTICE, DOGMATIX, ARE OUT DELIVERING MENHIRS, ASTERIX IS SUNBATHING OUTSIDE HIS HUT, PEOPLE LAZE ABOUT ENJOYING A SIESTA. YES, BY TOUTATIS, THE LITTLE GAULISH VILLAGE IS VERY PEACEFUL...
WHEREAS THE ROMAN CAMP OF AQUARIUM SEEMS TO BE IN A STATE OF GREAT EXCITEMENT...
BY JUPITER!
BY MERCURY!
GOOD OLD CAESAR!
GOOD OLD GLUTEUS!
YOU'LL NEVER RUN ALONE!
?
WHAT'S ALL THE NOISE ABOUT?
A MESSENGER HAS JUST COME FROM ROME WITH THE GOOD NEWS. GLUTEUS MAXIMUS HAS BEEN SELECTED TO REPRESENT ROME AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES!
GLUTEUS MAXIMUS? WHO'S HE?
YOU'RE PRETTY GREEN, AREN'T YOU, BILIUS? GLUTEUS MAXIMUS IS OUR CHAMPION! HE'S ONE OF OUR GARRISON, AND A CREDIT TO US ALL!
O GLUTEUS MAXIMUS, HOW RIGHT I WAS TO SEND YOU TO ROME FOR THE TRIALS! YOU'VE BEEN SELECTED, ALONG WITH THE BEST ATHLETES OF THE WHOLE ROMAN WORLD!
WELL, THAT'S NOT SURPRISING, O CENTURION GAIUS VERIAMBITIUS. I'M THE GREATEST!

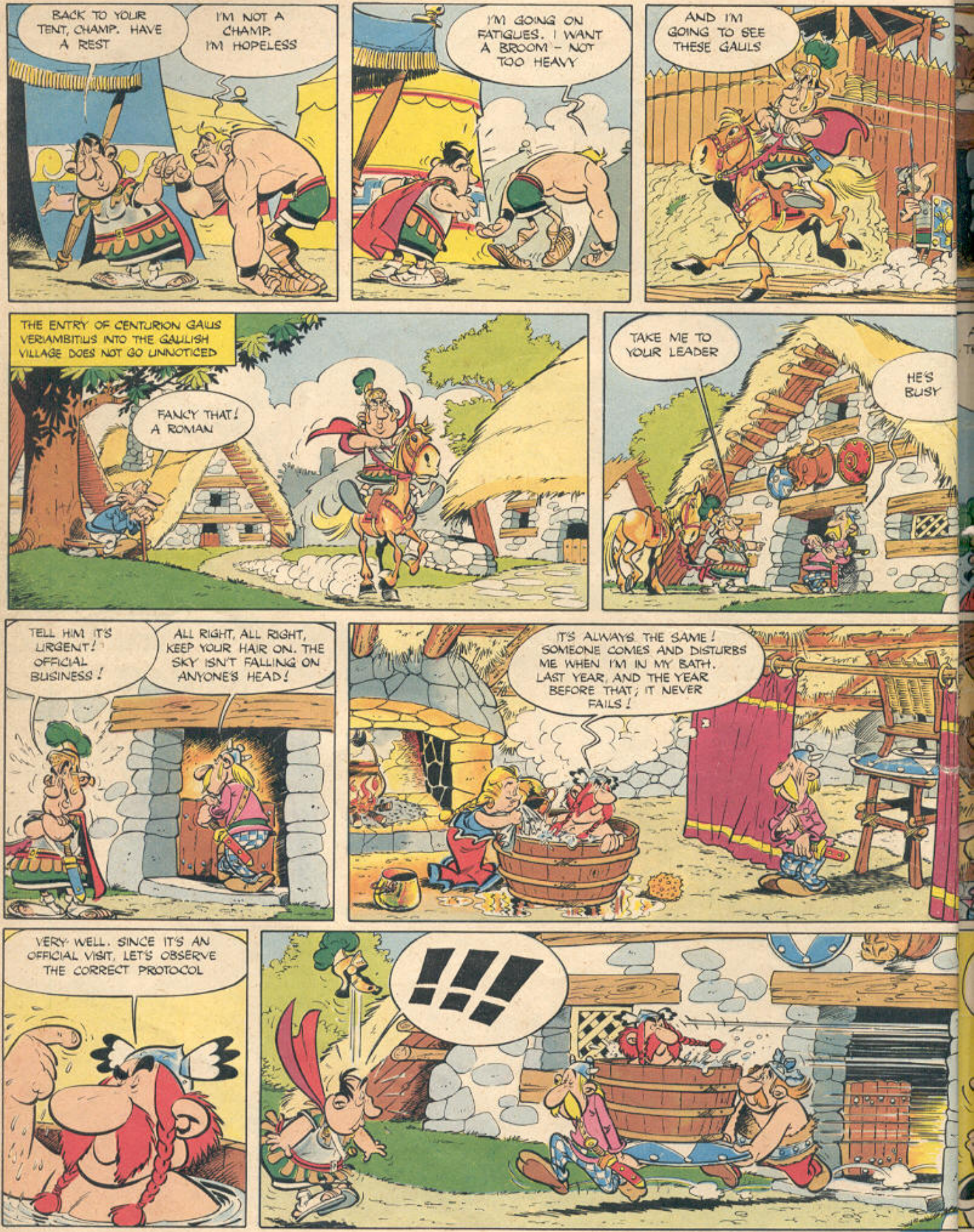

I WAS NEAR AQUARIUM PICKING MUSHROOMS - THEY'RE GOOD OVER THERE - WHEN I HEARD CHEERING. THE ROMANS SEEM TO BE IN A VERY GOOD MOOD!
COCORICO!
HM... THAT'S ODD, GERIATRIX. I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO MAKE OF THEM...
SOUP. MUSHROOM SOUP IS VERY NICE
?
SOUP?!... IS THAT ALL YOU CAN THINK OF, OBELIX?!...
WHEN YOU GET MUSHROOMS YOU SHOULD MAKE AN OMELETTE. THAT'S HOW THE REAL GOURMET EATS THEM!
BUT, CHIEF VITALSTATISTIX...
NOT ANOTHER WORD - I DO THE ORDERING ROUND HERE! WE'LL HAVE AN OMELETTE!
I WAS THINKING... PERHAPS ON TOAST...
SOMETIMES I GET THE IMPRESSION OUR FRIENDS DON'T TAKE THINGS SERIOUSLY ENOUGH... IT MAY BE A BAD SIGN FOR US IF THE ROMANS ARE IN A GOOD MOOD
SO WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST, O DRUID?
LET THEM STEW IN THEIR OWN JUICE!
IT BRINGS OUT THE FLAVOUR
???



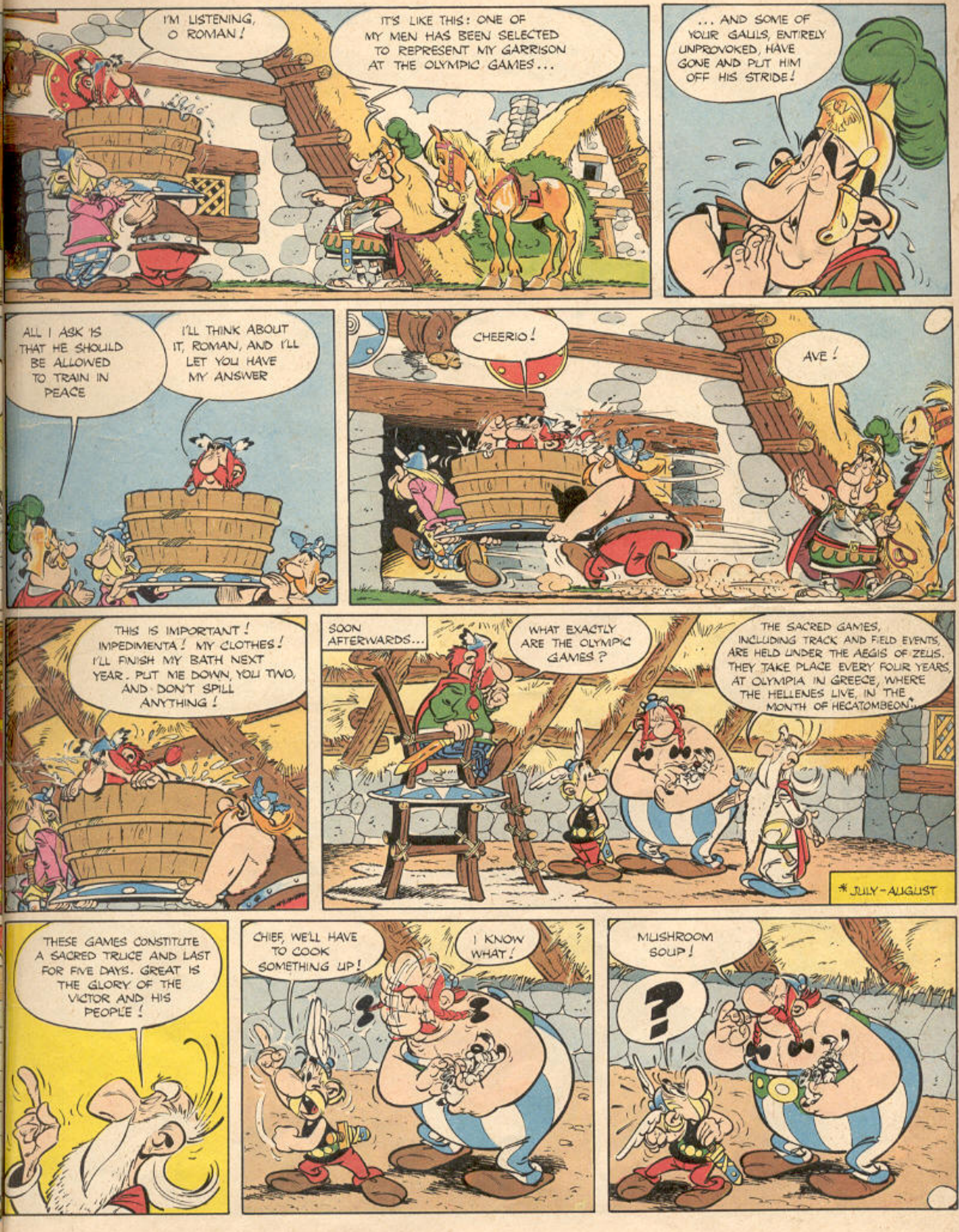
AT AQUARIUM, WHILE THE DUTY BUCCINIST IS BLOWING 'COME TO THE COOK-HOUSE DOOR, BOYS'...
TARATATARI!
A MORE SOPHISTICATED BLOW-OUT HAS BEEN PROVIDED FOR LEGIONARY GLUTEUS MAXIMUS
HERE'S YOUR SUPPER. I HOPE IT WILL DO
NOT BAD, O CENTURION GAIUS VERIAMBITIUS. ARMY RATIONS ARE IMPROVING! WHAT ARE THESE LITTLE BLACK THINGS?
THEY'RE STURGEON'S EGGS, SENT FROM PERSIA TO OUR COMMANDING OFFICER— CAVIAR TO THE GENERAL, SO TO SPEAK!
IF YOU WIN THE GOLD PALM AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES THERE'LL BE EXTRA PASSES FOR THE CIRCUS AND PROMOTION ALL ROUND
SPORTING PRESTIGE IS A MATTER OF SUCH NATIONAL IMPORTANCE THAT IF YOU WIN I COULD EVEN BECOME PREFECT OF GAUL! DON'T LET ME DOWN!
STOP WORRYING— I WON'T FAIL YOU, VERIAMBITIUS
IT'LL BE A PUSHOVER. I'M THE GREATEST! NOW I'M OFF TO THE FOREST TO DO SOME TRAINING
HIS MORALE IS MARVELLOUS. WITH CONFIDENCE LIKE THAT, HE CAN'T LOSE!
FIRST A BIT OF SPRINTING – I'M THE FASTEST MAN IN THE WORLD!
MEANWHILE, IN ANOTHER PART OF THE FOREST...
I FEEL ON TOP FORM FOR A SPOT OF BOAR-HUNTING. GETAFIX GAVE ME SOME OF THE MAGIC POTION WHICH MAKES US INVINCIBLE!
I KNOW, I KNOW, AND I DIDN'T GET ANY SEEING AS I...
ONE! TWO! ONE! TWO!
???


WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH THAT ROMAN ?
I HAVEN'T A CLUE. PERHAPS SOMEONE'S AFTER HIM
I'LL GO AND ASK HIM
?
!
ONE! TWO! I'M THE FASTEST! ONE!...
EXCUSE ME...
IS SOMEONE...
?
... AFTER YOU?
!
OBELIX!
LEAVE THAT ROMAN ALONE...
!
... AND LET'S GO AND FIND SOME BOARS
ALL RIGHT
THEY OVERTOOK ME! BOTH OF THEM!
ANYWAY, WHEN IT COMES TO THROWING THE JAVELIN...
CRACK!
I'M THE GREATEST!
PAAAF!


DON'T TAKE ANY NOTICE OF MY FRIEND, ROMAN ...
OBELIX! WHY DID YOU DO THAT? HE WASN'T BOTHERING US
WHAT D'YOU MEAN? HE THREW THAT BIT OF WOOD AT MY HEAD, SO I THREW ONE BACK AT HIM. WE'RE QUITS NOW
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GET AWAY WITH THIS, BY JUPITER!
YOU, FATTY! I'LL TAKE YOU ON AT ORDINARY WRESTLING, ALL-IN WRESTLING, BOXING! I'LL WALLOP YOU AT THOSE! I'M THE GREATEST! I'M ...
I'M NOT FAT!
PAFFF!
5A
TELL ME STRAIGHT, ASTERIX, ONCE AND FOR ALL: DO YOU THINK I'M FAT?
OF COURSE NOT, OBELIX. YOUR CHEST HAS SLIPPED A BIT, THAT'S ALL. COME ON, ARE WE GOING TO GET THOSE BOARS?
I'M HOPELESS!
WHAT D'YOU MEAN, HOPELESS?!?
WHO SAID YOU WERE HOPELESS?
I SAID I WAS HOPELESS. EVERYONE IS BETTER THAN ME. I'VE BEEN BEATEN BY ALL THE GAULS I MET. A LITTLE TITCH AND A FAT ONE WITH A PAUNCH. EVERYONE
5B
THE GAULS, BY JUPITER! IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE WE HAD ANY TROUBLE WITH THEM!



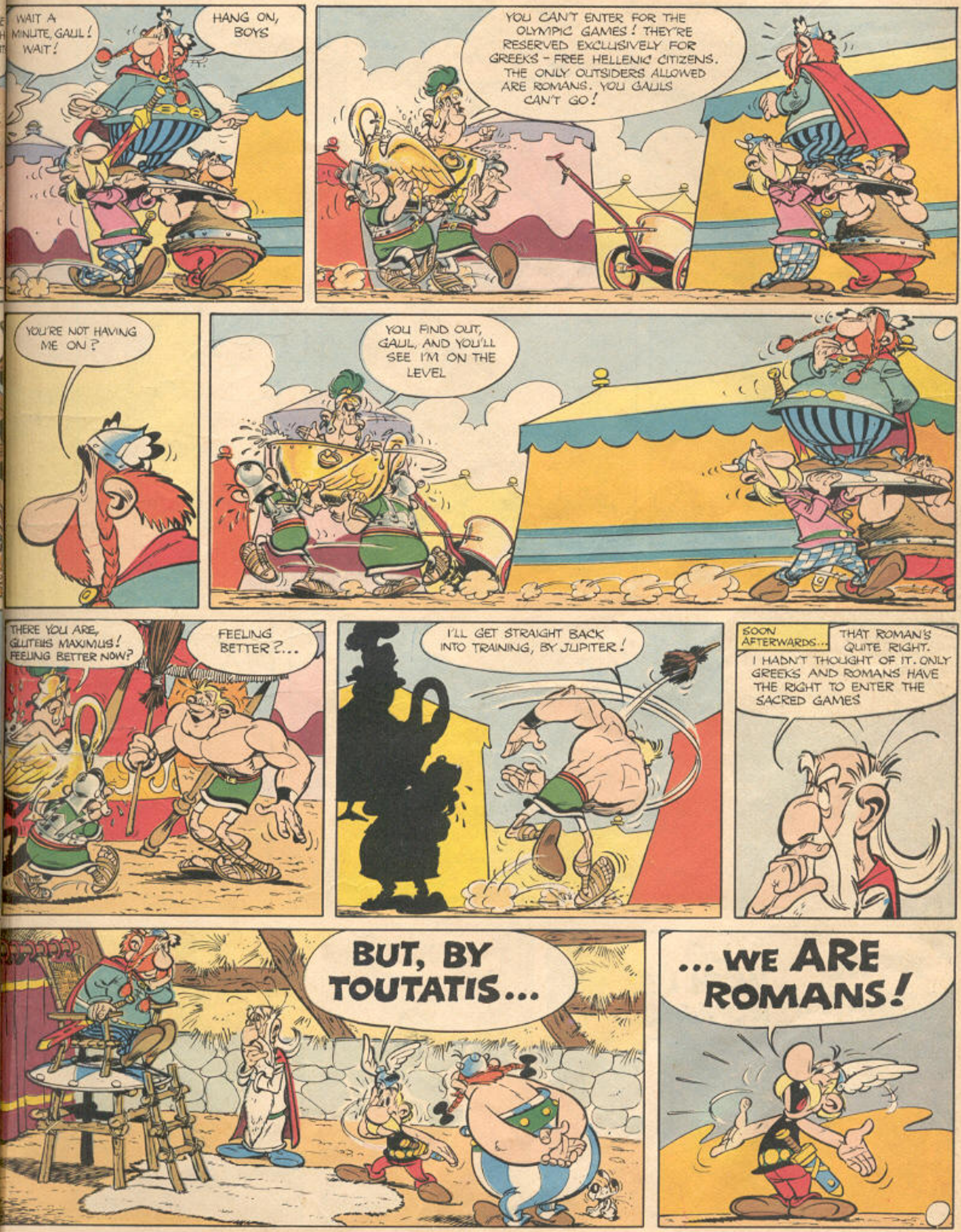
BACK TO YOUR TENT, CHAMP. HAVE A REST
I'M NOT A CHAMP. I'M HOPELESS
I'M GOING ON FATIGUES. I WANT A BROOM - NOT TOO HEAVY
AND I'M GOING TO SEE THESE GAULS
THE ENTRY OF CENTURION GAIUS VERIAMBITIUS INTO THE GAULISH VILLAGE DOES NOT GO UNNOTICED
FANCY THAT! A ROMAN
TAKE ME TO YOUR LEADER
HE'S BUSY
TELL HIM IT'S URGENT! OFFICIAL BUSINESS!
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT, KEEP YOUR HAIR ON. THE SKY ISN'T FALLING ON ANYONE'S HEAD!
IT'S ALWAYS THE SAME! SOMEONE COMES AND DISTURBS ME WHEN I'M IN MY BATH. LAST YEAR, AND THE YEAR BEFORE THAT; IT NEVER FAILS!
VERY WELL. SINCE IT'S AN OFFICIAL VISIT, LET'S OBSERVE THE CORRECT PROTOCOL
!!!



I'M LISTENING, O ROMAN!
IT'S LIKE THIS: ONE OF MY MEN HAS BEEN SELECTED TO REPRESENT MY GARRISON AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES...
... AND SOME OF YOUR GAULS, ENTIRELY UNPROVOKED, HAVE GONE AND PUT HIM OFF HIS STRIDE!
ALL I ASK IS THAT HE SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO TRAIN IN PEACE
I'LL THINK ABOUT IT, ROMAN, AND I'LL LET YOU HAVE MY ANSWER
CHEERIO!
AVE!
THIS IS IMPORTANT! IMPEDIMENTA! MY CLOTHES! I'LL FINISH MY BATH NEXT YEAR. PUT ME DOWN, YOU TWO, AND DON'T SPILL ANYTHING!
SOON AFTERWARDS...
WHAT EXACTLY ARE THE OLYMPIC GAMES?
THE SACRED GAMES, INCLUDING TRACK AND FIELD EVENTS, ARE HELD UNDER THE AEGIS OF ZEUS. THEY TAKE PLACE EVERY FOUR YEARS, AT OLYMPIA IN GREECE, WHERE THE HELLENES LIVE, IN THE MONTH OF HECATOMBEON*.
* JULY-AUGUST
THESE GAMES CONSTITUTE A SACRED TRUCE AND LAST FOR FIVE DAYS. GREAT IS THE GLORY OF THE VICTOR AND HIS PEOPLE!
CHIEF, WE'LL HAVE TO COOK SOMETHING UP!
I KNOW WHAT!
MUSHROOM SOUP!
?



I'M TELLING YOU! THEY WON'T WORRY YOU ANY MORE. COME ON, BE A GOOD CHAP. PUT THAT BROOM DOWN!
NO, EVEN THIS BROOM IS TOO GOOD FOR ME!
ALL RIGHT, JUST SUPPOSE THEY ARE BETTER THAN YOU, IT'S ONLY BECAUSE THEY'VE GOT A MAGIC POTION WHICH GIVES THEM SUPERHUMAN STRENGTH
— THAT'S ALL!
YOUR OPPONENTS AT THE GAMES WON'T HAVE ANY POTION! HO! HO! HO!
THAT'S TRUE! I HADN'T THOUGHT OF THAT!
CENTURION, A GAULISH CHIEF WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOU
SPLENDID! I'LL SHOW THEM I'M FRIENDLY BY OBSERVING THEIR OWN CUSTOMS. THAT WILL FLATTER THEM. MY HELMET! WHERE'S MY HELMET?
SOON AFTERWARDS...
O GAUL, THE CENTURION WILL SEE YOU OUTSIDE HIS TENT!
YOU HEARD, BOYS! IN WE GO!
WOTCHER!
AVE!
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT WHAT YOU SAID...
AND?
WE'VE DECIDED TO ENTER FOR THE OLYMPIC GAMES AS WELL!
WHAT?
YES, WE'LL SEND A CHAMPION TO OLYMPIA! AND MAY THE BEST MAN WIN! CHEERIO!
WHOOSH! WHOOSH! WHOOSH! WHOOSH!


WAIT A MINUTE, GAUL! WAIT!
HANG ON, BOYS
YOU CAN'T ENTER FOR THE OLYMPIC GAMES! THEY'RE RESERVED EXCLUSIVELY FOR GREEKS - FREE HELLENIC CITIZENS. THE ONLY OUTSIDERS ALLOWED ARE ROMANS. YOU GAULS CAN'T GO!
YOU'RE NOT HAVING ME ON?
YOU FIND OUT, GAUL, AND YOU'LL SEE I'M ON THE LEVEL
THERE YOU ARE, GLUTEUS MAXIMUS! FEELING BETTER NOW?
FEELING BETTER?...
I'LL GET STRAIGHT BACK INTO TRAINING, BY JUPITER!
SOON AFTERWARDS...
THAT ROMAN'S QUITE RIGHT. I HADN'T THOUGHT OF IT. ONLY GREEKS AND ROMANS HAVE THE RIGHT TO ENTER THE SACRED GAMES
BUT, BY TOUTATIS...
...WE ARE ROMANS!

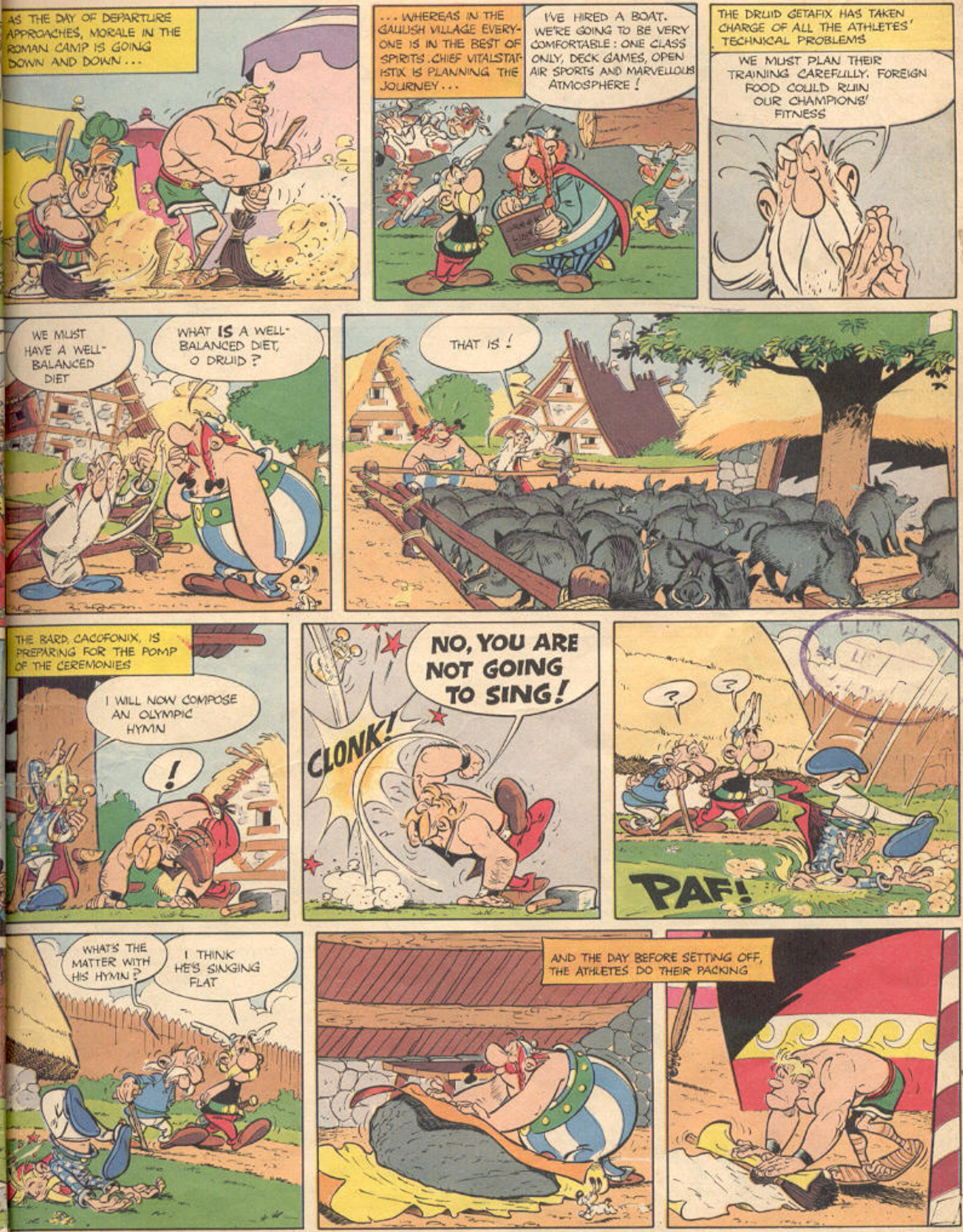


US, ROMANS? SINCE WHEN?
SINCE OLD JULIUS CONQUERED GAUL! HE'S COMMENTED ON THE SUBJECT AT LENGTH, HASN'T HE?
AM I A ROMAN?
OF COURSE! ASTERIX IS RIGHT. WE'RE PART OF THE ROMAN WORLD!
LET'S ORGANIZE A FEAST TO CELEBRATE. SOME PEOPLE ARE GOING TO GET A SURPRISE!
IN THE CAMP OF AQUARIUM...
I SHOULDN'T BE SURPRISED IF THOSE GAULS WERE UP TO SOMETHING...
...I DON'T TRUST THEM AN INCH...
I THINK I'LL GO AND SCOUT ROUND NEAR THEIR VILLAGE
CARRY ON TRAINING, GLUTEUS MAXIMUS. I'LL BE BACK SOON
NEXT!
PAF!
JOIN THE ARMY, THEY SAID. AN ATMOSPHERE OF HEALTHY COMRADESHIP, THEY SAID...
SOON AFTERWARDS...
I'LL TAKE A PEEP THROUGH THAT CRACK OVER THERE...
WE'RE ROMANS!
UP WITH US ROMANS!
THESE ROMANS ARE CRAZY!
I ASK YOU! YOU FIGHT PEOPLE, YOU MASSACRE THEM, YOU INVADE AND OCCUPY THEIR TERRITORY, AND THEN THEY TURN AGAINST YOU FOR NO REASON AT ALL!

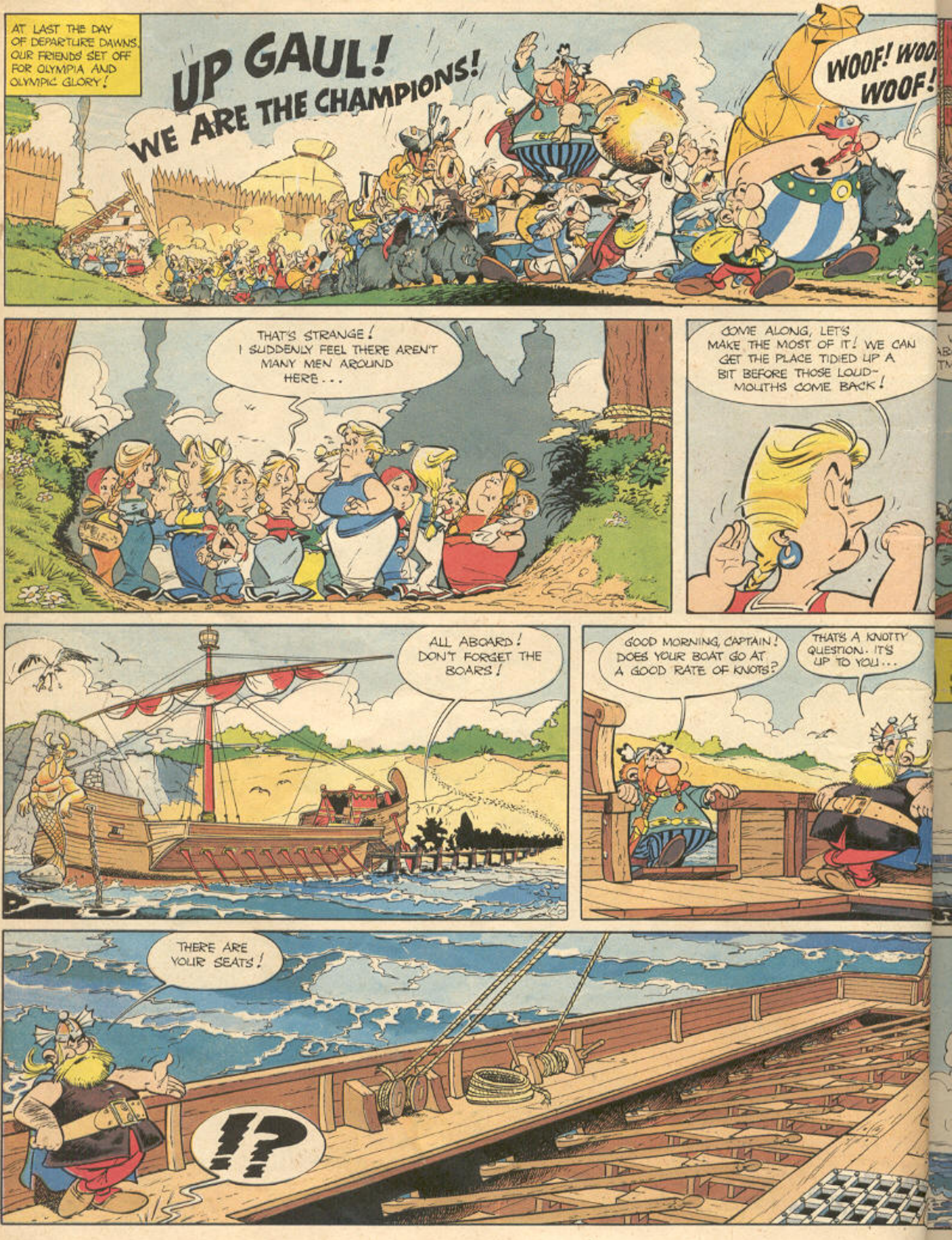


ET NUNC, REGES, INTELLIGITE...
...ERUDIMINI, QUI JUDICATIS TERRAM
EVERYTHING UNDER CONTROL CENTURION ?
TAP TAP TAP TAP!
???
!
IN THE GAULISH VILLAGE, MORALE IS HIGH...
WITH THE MAGIC POTION TO MAKE US INVINCIBLE, WE'RE SURE TO WIN! THAT'S WHAT I CALL SPORT – NOTHING LEFT TO CHANCE!
THAT REMINDS ME, WE MUST SELECT THE CHAMPIONS TO REPRESENT OUR VILLAGE
SCRUNCH SCRUNCH
COME ALONG! EVERYONE TAKE HIS MAGIC POTION BEFORE THE HEATS!
ON YOUR MARKS! THE FINISHING LINE IS OVER THERE BY CACOFONIX
HE SAID EVERYONE
NOT YOU, OBELIX. YOU FELL IN IT WHEN YOU WERE A BABY!
SELECTION PROVES DIFFICULT; SINCE ALL THE COMPETITORS HAVE MAGIC POTION COMING OUT OF THEIR EARS, THEY ALL SHOW THE SAME TURN OF SPEED
I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN YOU'D SAY THAT!
SHUT UP! AND RUN!
BRATS! LET YOUR ELDERS AND BETTERS PASS!
YOUTH MUST HAVE ITS FLING!
BADABOOM BADABOOM BADABOOM
WANT A POKE UP YOUR HOOTER?
GRANDPA!


THE OLDEST INHABITANT SHOULD REPRESENT THE VILLAGE!
NO! I SHALL GO TO THE OLYMPIC GAMES!
HUH! MIGHT JUST AS WELL SEND DOGMATIX. HE'S BETTER THAN YOU
BETTER THAN ME?
WELL, CAN YOU SCRATCH YOUR EAR WITH YOUR HIND LEG?
?!
ORDER! ORDER! THE OLYMPIC COMMITTEE HAS CHOSEN OUR TEAM
ASTERIX, BECAUSE HE'S THE MOST INTELLIGENT AND BECAUSE WITHOUT HIM WE WOULDN'T BE COMPETING IN THE GAMES AT ALL, AND OBELIX BECAUSE THE POTION HAD A PERMANENT EFFECT ON HIM
EXACTLY! I FELL IN WHEN I WAS A BABY!
GET AWAY! DO TELL ME ALL ABOUT IT...
AND NOW, I'VE GOT A SURPRISE FOR YOU! WE SHALL ALL ACCOMPANY OUR TEAM TO OLYMPIA TO CHEER THEM ON!
GOOD OLD VITALSTATISTIX! GOOD OLD ASTERIX! GOOD OLD OBELIX!
?
OBJECTION! I DON'T AGREE! LOOK!
!!!



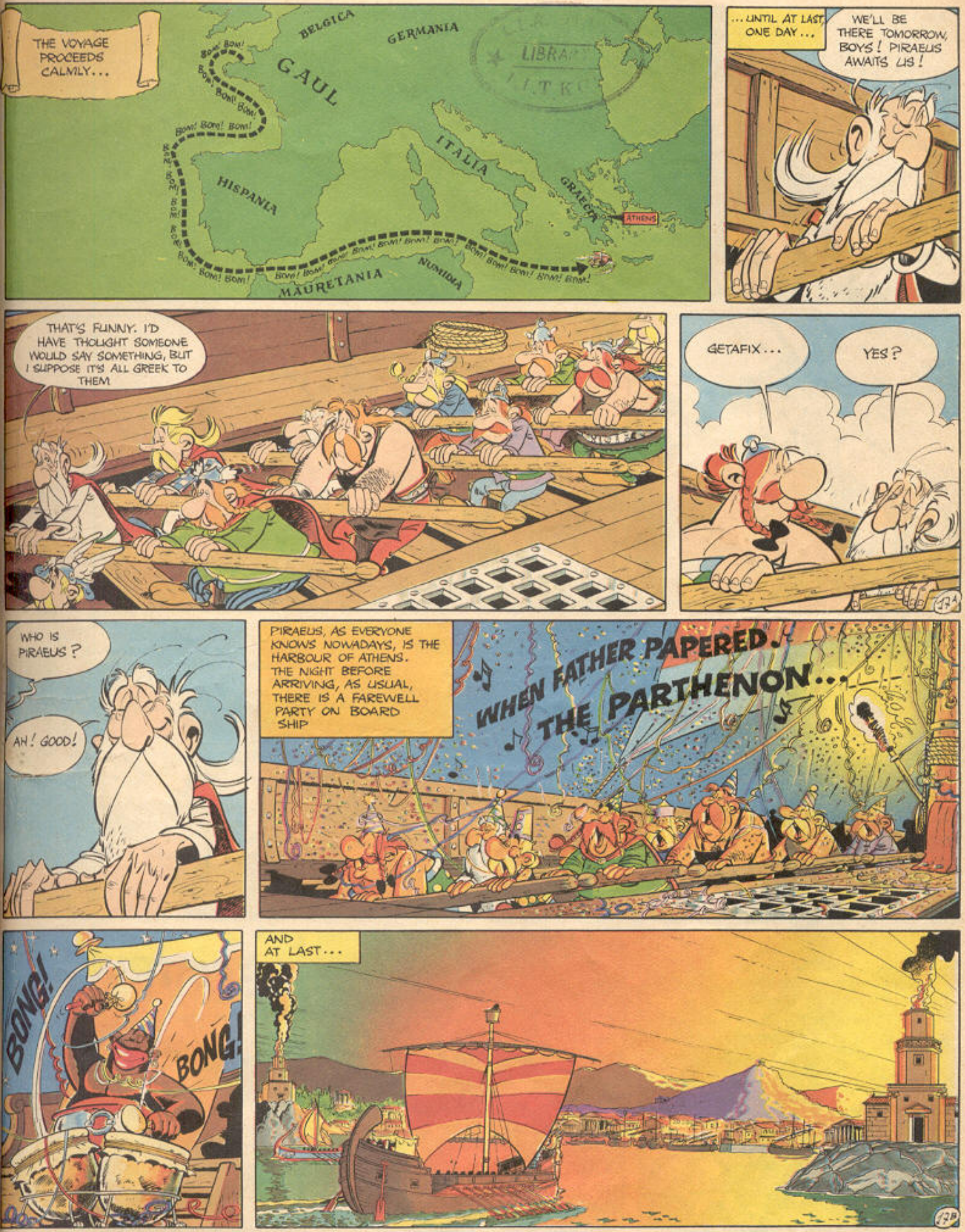
AS THE DAY OF DEPARTURE APPROACHES, MORALE IN THE ROMAN CAMP IS GOING DOWN AND DOWN...
...WHEREAS IN THE GAULISH VILLAGE EVERYONE IS IN THE BEST OF SPIRITS. CHIEF VITALSTATISTIX IS PLANNING THE JOURNEY...
I'VE HIRED A BOAT. WE'RE GOING TO BE VERY COMFORTABLE: ONE CLASS ONLY, DECK GAMES, OPEN AIR SPORTS AND MARVELLOUS ATMOSPHERE!
THE DRUID GETAFIX HAS TAKEN CHARGE OF ALL THE ATHLETES' TECHNICAL PROBLEMS
WE MUST PLAN THEIR TRAINING CAREFULLY. FOREIGN FOOD COULD RUIN OUR CHAMPIONS' FITNESS
WE MUST HAVE A WELL-BALANCED DIET
WHAT IS A WELL-BALANCED DIET, O DRUID?
THAT IS!
THE BARD, CACOFONIX, IS PREPARING FOR THE POMP OF THE CEREMONIES
I WILL NOW COMPOSE AN OLYMPIC HYMN
!
NO, YOU ARE NOT GOING TO SING!
CLONK!
?
?
PAF!
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HIS HYMN?
I THINK HE'S SINGING FLAT
AND THE DAY BEFORE SETTING OFF, THE ATHLETES DO THEIR PACKING


AT LAST THE DAY OF DEPARTURE DAWNS. OUR FRIENDS SET OFF FOR OLYMPIA AND OLYMPIC GLORY!
UP GAUL! WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS!
WOOF! WOO WOOF!
THAT'S STRANGE! I SUDDENLY FEEL THERE AREN'T MANY MEN AROUND HERE...
COME ALONG, LET'S MAKE THE MOST OF IT! WE CAN GET THE PLACE TIDIED UP A BIT BEFORE THOSE LOUD-MOUTHS COME BACK!
ALL ABOARD! DON'T FORGET THE BOARS!
GOOD MORNING, CAPTAIN! DOES YOUR BOAT GO AT A GOOD RATE OF KNOTS?
THAT'S A KNOTTY QUESTION. IT'S UP TO YOU...
THERE ARE YOUR SEATS!
!?



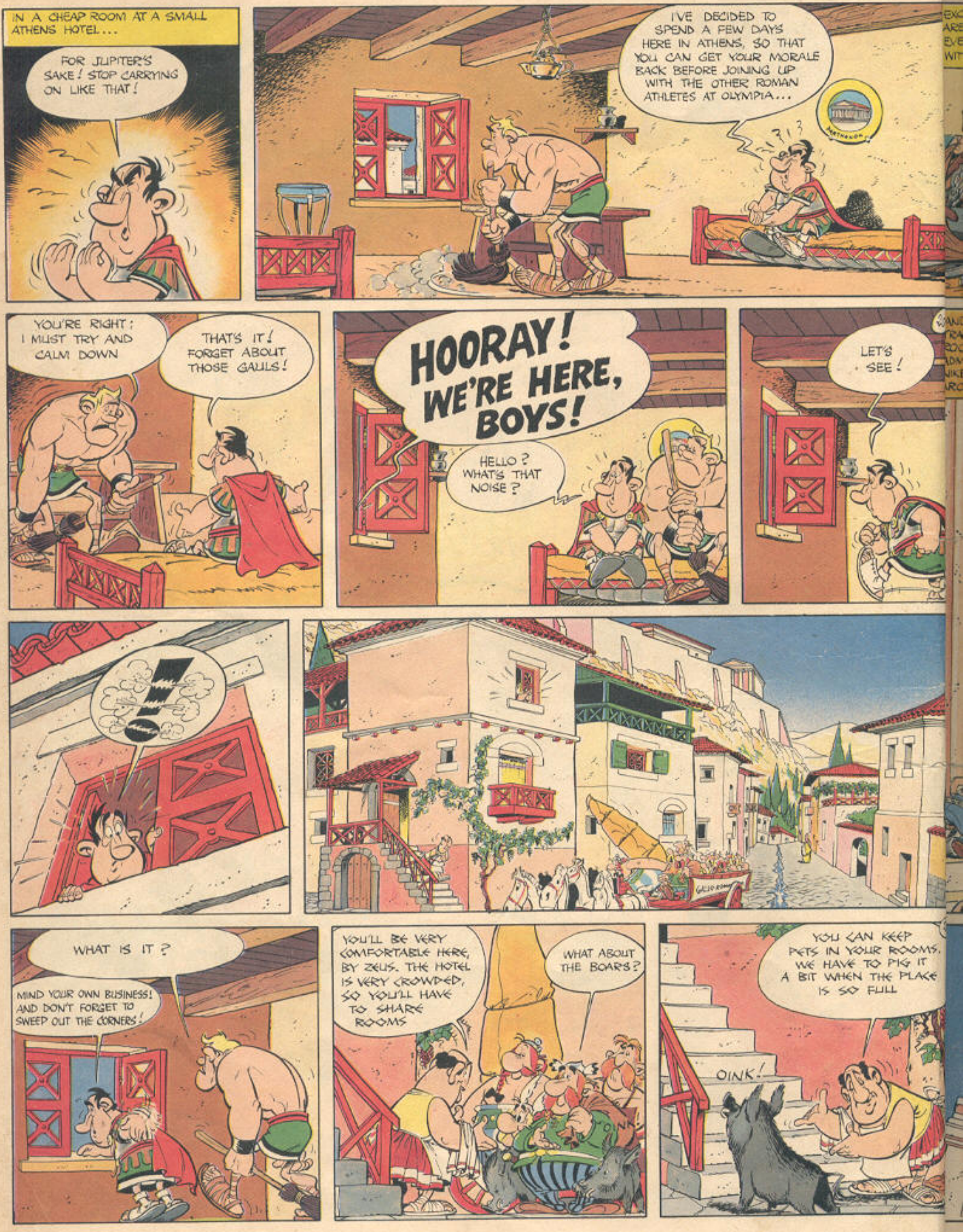
WHAT ARE YOU MOANING ABOUT? ONE CLASS ONLY, AS AGREED. AS FOR DECK GAMES AND SPORT, YOU'RE GOING TO GET PLENTY OF THAT
AND I ADVISE YOU TO GET ROWING, FOR A START. WE MUST SAIL WITH THE TIDE
WHAT ABOUT THE ATMOSPHERE?
YOU HAVE A POINT THERE. LET THE MUSIC BEGIN!
SNAP!
BONG!
BONG!
AND DON'T MAKE ANY FUSS. YOU'RE GETTING LUXURY CLASS. ON THE USUAL CRUISES, THE PASSENGERS ARE CHAINED UP AND WHIPPED. THERE'S A LONG WAITING LIST. EVERYONE WANTS TO GET TO THE OLYMPIC GAMES!
15A
THE GALLEY SETS OFF FOR ITS DISTANT DESTINATION, THE FASCINATING LAND OF GREECE, WITH ITS PASSENGERS IN THAT DELIGHTFUL SHIPBOARD MOOD WHICH MAKES YOU FORGET ALL YOUR WORRIES
BOM! BOM! BOM! BOM! BOM! BOM! BOM!
THERE'S NOTHING LIKE A SEA VOYAGE TO RELAX YOU, IS THERE, ASTERIX?
NO, IT'S THE STOPS THAT ARE SO TIRING
NOW AND THEN SOME INCIDENT OR CHANCE MEETING MAKES A PLEASANT CHANGE
A PIRATE GALLEY!
WHERE?


GALLEY RIGHT AHEAD!
THERE AREN'T ONE OR TWO GAULS ABOARD THAT GALLEY, BY ANY CHANCE?
IT'S SWARMING WITH FEROCIOUS GAULISH WARRIORS!
NOW LET'S KEEP CALM, ME HEARTIES. WE'RE OUT OF OUR DEPTH HERE. STAND BY TO ABANDON SHIP! SCUTTLE HER!
THEY'RE OURS, AREN'T THEY, ASTERIX?
WOOF!
DON'T PUSH!
OLD PEOPLE FIRST!
JUST A MINUTE!
BOARDING PIRATE VESSELS IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE FARE. IT'S AN EXTRA
?
?
WHAT D'YOU MEAN, AN EXTRA?
I'D JUST LIKE TO POINT OUT THAT BOARDING IS AN OPTIONAL EXTRA...
APPLY TO THE PURSER. IT'S TWO SESTERTII
WE'LL COMPLAIN TO THE COMPANY! IT'S AN ABSOLUTE DISGRACE! YOU CAN KEEP YOUR BLESSED PIRATE!
BOM! BOM! BOM! BOM!
BOM! BOM!
WHAT ABOUT US, THEN? THEY REALLY ARE GETTING RATHER TIRESOME!
WHO'S FOR DINNER? SHALL WE DRAW LOTS, BOYS?
YOU'VE MANAGED TO KEEP YOUR PLACE IN THE SUN, I SEE!


THE VOYAGE PROCEEDS CALMLY...
BELGICA
GERMANIA
GAUL
ITALIA
HISPANIA
GRAECIA
ATHENS
MAURETANIA
NUMIDIA
Bom! Bom!
...UNTIL AT LAST, ONE DAY...
WE'LL BE THERE TOMORROW, BOYS! PIRAEUS AWAITS US!
THAT'S FUNNY. I'D HAVE THOUGHT SOMEONE WOULD SAY SOMETHING, BUT I SUPPOSE IT'S ALL GREEK TO THEM
GETAFIX...
YES?
WHO IS PIRAEUS?
AH! GOOD!
PIRAEUS, AS EVERYONE KNOWS NOWADAYS, IS THE HARBOUR OF ATHENS. THE NIGHT BEFORE ARRIVING, AS USUAL, THERE IS A FAREWELL PARTY ON BOARD SHIP
WHEN FATHER PAPERED THE PARTHENON...
BONG!
BONG!
AND AT LAST...

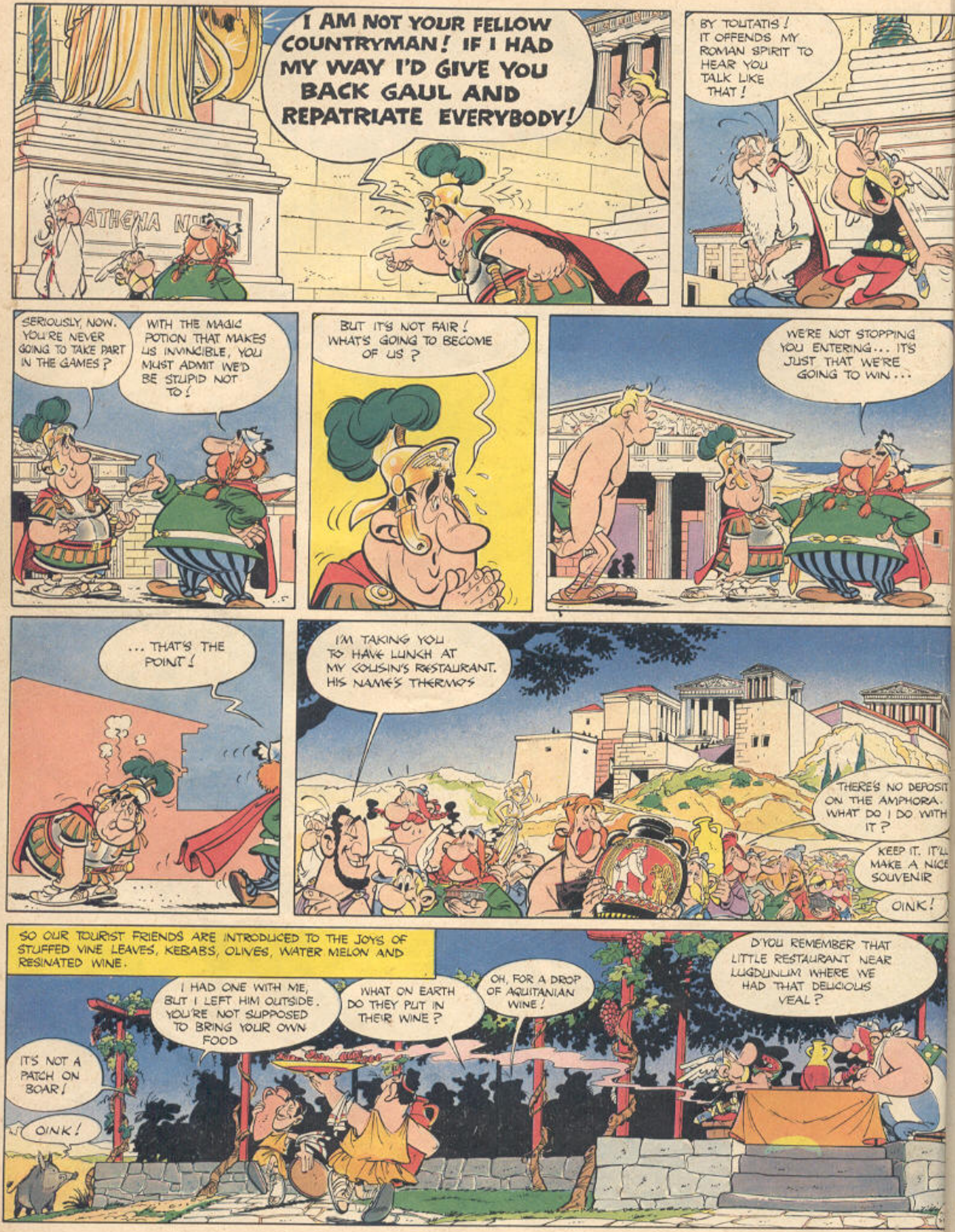

RIGHT, BOYS! WE REPRESENT GAUL; LET US BE WORTHY OF HER! WE WON'T DRAW ATTENTION TO OURSELVES, OR MAKE FUN OF THE NATIVES, EVEN IF THEY DON'T HAVE ALL THE ADVANTAGES OF OUR GLORIOUS CULTURAL HERITAGE!
OFF WE GO! AND DON'T FORGET THE BOARS
HEY, ASTERIX!
WHAT IS IT?
HAVE YOU SEEN THEIR PROFILES?
SSH, OBELIX. YOU'LL PUT THEIR NOSES OUT OF JOINT!
I AM DIABETES, A GUIDE. I CAN TAKE YOU TO ATHENS BY CHARIOT AND SHOW YOU ROUND TH CITY, IF YOU LIKE
WE'VE GOT A LITTLE TIME TO SPARE BEFORE WE LEAVE FOR OLYMPIA. IT WOULD BE A PITY NOT TO VISIT ATHENS
SHALL WE GO BOYS?
YERRSS!
YOU CAN EXCHANGE YOUR SESTERTII FOR OBOLS, DRACHMAS AND MINES AT MAKALOS'S PLACE. YOU'RE QUITE SAFE; HE'S A COUSIN OF MINE
YOU CAN FEEL QUITE SAFE WITH THE CHARIOT DRIVER TOO. HE'S KUDOS, ANOTHER COUSIN OF MINE
JUST A MINUTE. SOMEONE'S MISSING
TEEHEEHEE!
GERIATRIX!
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT! THAT'S THE TROUBLE WITH THESE ORGANIZED TRIPS, YOU'RE NEVER FREE TO DO YOUR OWN THING!


UP GAUL! WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS!
GALLO-ROMAN TEAM
DON'T YOU THINK WE SHOULD ASK THEM TO BE A LITTLE QUIETER?
HUH! WE'RE GOING TO WIN THE GAMES, SO WE MAY AS WELL MAKE A SPLASH
I'LL DRIVE YOU TO A GOOD HOTEL IN ATHENS. MY COUSIN PHALLINTODISEUS IS THE MANAGER
THESE HORSES ARE GOOD
YES, THEY'RE AN EXCELLENT TEAM... THEY'RE ALL COUSINS
I'LL SHOW YOU THE ACROPOLIS!
NO, OBELIX, NOT ANOTHER COUSIN!
I DIDN'T SAY A WORD! WHO IS THIS THEA CROPOLIS?
THERE SHE IS!
ATHENS


IN A CHEAP ROOM AT A SMALL ATHENS HOTEL...
FOR JUPITER'S SAKE! STOP CARRYING ON LIKE THAT!
I'VE DECIDED TO SPEND A FEW DAYS HERE IN ATHENS, SO THAT YOU CAN GET YOUR MORALE BACK BEFORE JOINING UP WITH THE OTHER ROMAN ATHLETES AT OLYMPIA...
YOU'RE RIGHT: I MUST TRY AND CALM DOWN
THAT'S IT! FORGET ABOUT THOSE GAULS!
HOORAY! WE'RE HERE, BOYS!
HELLO? WHAT'S THAT NOISE?
LET'S SEE!
WHAT IS IT?
MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS! AND DON'T FORGET TO SWEEP OUT THE CORNERS!
YOU'LL BE VERY COMFORTABLE HERE, BY ZEUS. THE HOTEL IS VERY CROWDED, SO YOU'LL HAVE TO SHARE ROOMS
WHAT ABOUT THE BOARS?
YOU CAN KEEP PETS IN YOUR ROOMS. WE HAVE TO PIG IT A BIT WHEN THE PLACE IS SO FULL
OINK!

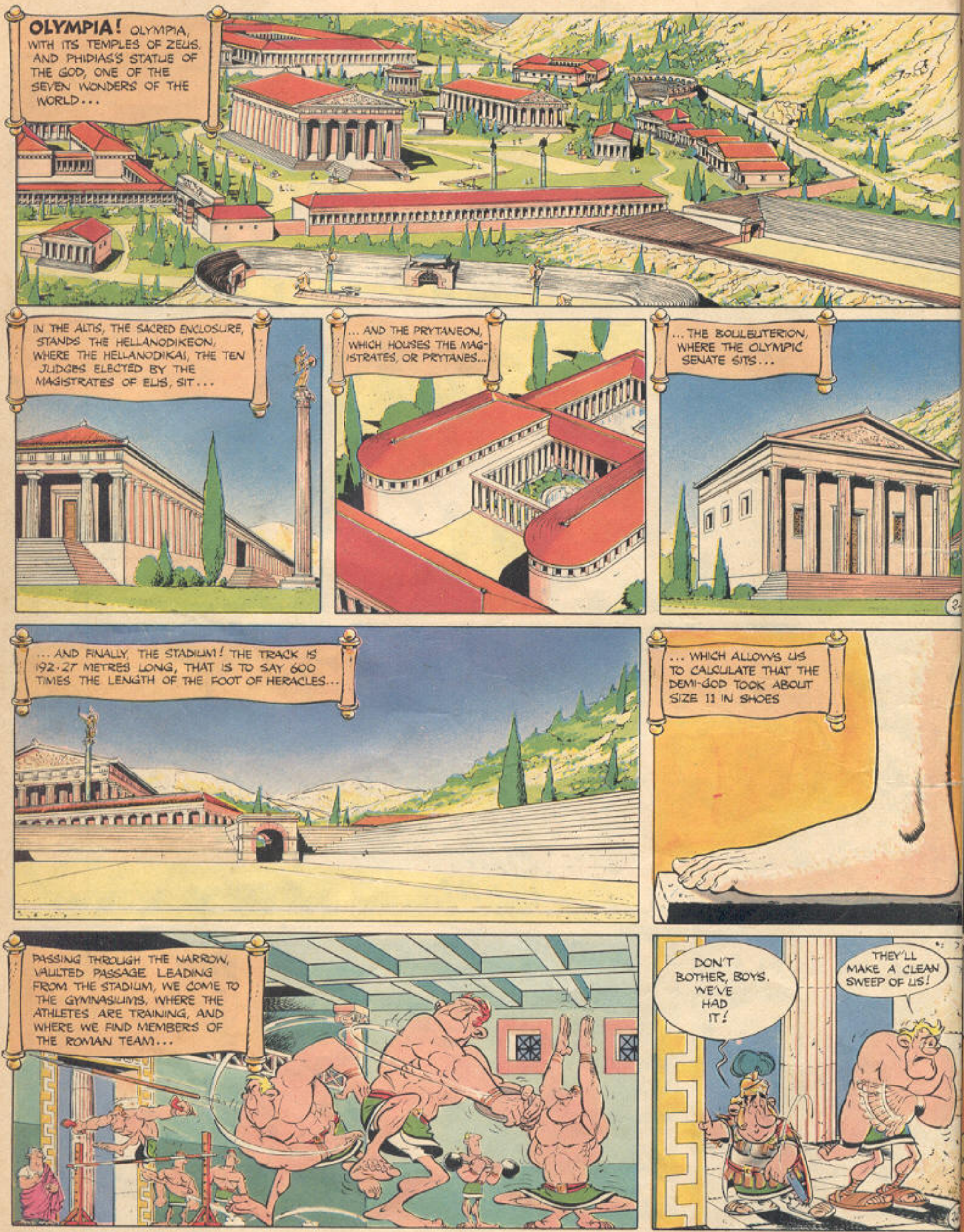


EXCEPT FOR THE BOARS, WHO ARE VERY FUSSY ANIMALS, EVERYONE IS VERY PLEASED WITH THE ACCOMMODATION
I'M WARNING YOU, I SLEEP WITH THE WINDOW CLOSED!
OINK!
COME ALONG, BOYS! DIABETES IS GOING TO SHOW US THE ACROPOLIS
AND SOON AFTERWARDS ALL OUR TRAVELLERS CAN BE SEEN ON THE SACRED ROCK OF THE ACROPOLIS, WHERE THEY ADMIRE THE PROPYLAEA, THE TEMPLE OF NIKE AND THAT MASTERPIECE OF CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE, THE PARTHENON...
IT REMINDS ME OF BURDIGALA...
NO, THERE'S A LITTLE SQUARE IN MASSILIA...
WHAT, NO DOLMENS?
WHAT ARE **YOU** DOING HERE?
NOT BAD, IF YOU LIKE COLUMNS
OINK!
LOOK AT THAT! LOOK AT THAT, MY FRIENDS!
SMASHING!
HOLD IT THERE!
WELL, WHAT D'YOU THINK OF IT?
MAGNIFICENT!
YES, IT'S QUITE GOOD, FOR FOREIGNERS
ATH
SPEAKING OF FOREIGNERS, HERE COME OUR FELLOW COUNTRYMEN!
!

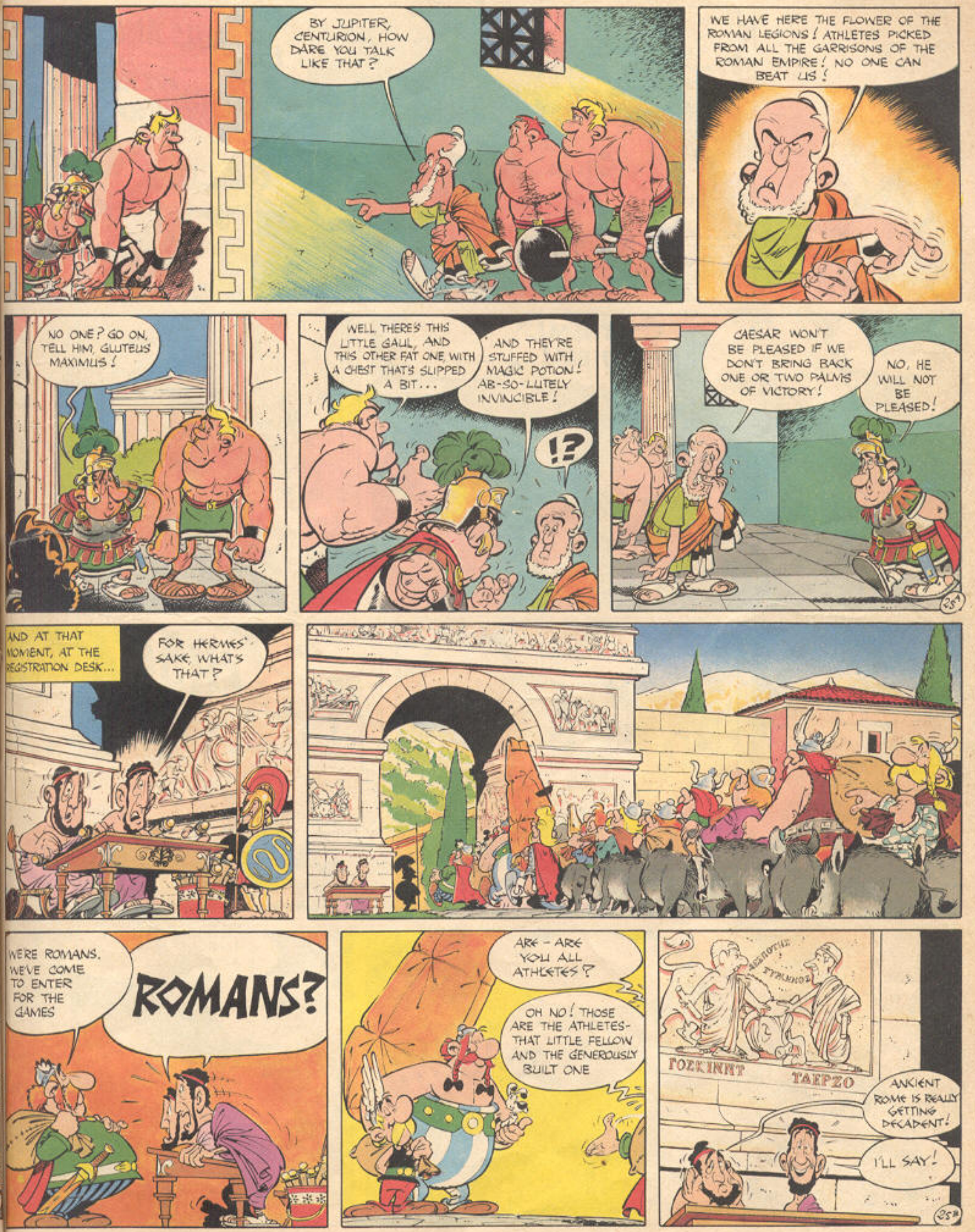

I AM NOT YOUR FELLOW COUNTRYMAN! IF I HAD MY WAY I'D GIVE YOU BACK GAUL AND REPATRIATE EVERYBODY!
ATHENA NI
BY TOUTATIS! IT OFFENDS MY ROMAN SPIRIT TO HEAR YOU TALK LIKE THAT!
SERIOUSLY, NOW. YOU'RE NEVER GOING TO TAKE PART IN THE GAMES?
WITH THE MAGIC POTION THAT MAKES US INVINCIBLE, YOU MUST ADMIT WE'D BE STUPID NOT TO!
BUT IT'S NOT FAIR! WHAT'S GOING TO BECOME OF US?
WE'RE NOT STOPPING YOU ENTERING... IT'S JUST THAT WE'RE GOING TO WIN...
... THAT'S THE POINT!
I'M TAKING YOU TO HAVE LUNCH AT MY COUSIN'S RESTAURANT. HIS NAME'S THERMOS
THERE'S NO DEPOSIT ON THE AMPHORA. WHAT DO I DO WITH IT?
KEEP IT. IT'LL MAKE A NICE SOUVENIR
OINK!
SO OUR TOURIST FRIENDS ARE INTRODUCED TO THE JOYS OF STUFFED VINE LEAVES, KEBABS, OLIVES, WATER MELON AND RESINATED WINE.
IT'S NOT A PATCH ON BOAR!
OINK!
I HAD ONE WITH ME, BUT I LEFT HIM OUTSIDE. YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BRING YOUR OWN FOOD
WHAT ON EARTH DO THEY PUT IN THEIR WINE?
OH, FOR A DROP OF AQUITANIAN WINE!
D'YOU REMEMBER THAT LITTLE RESTAURANT NEAR LUGDUNUM WHERE WE HAD THAT DELICIOUS VEAL?

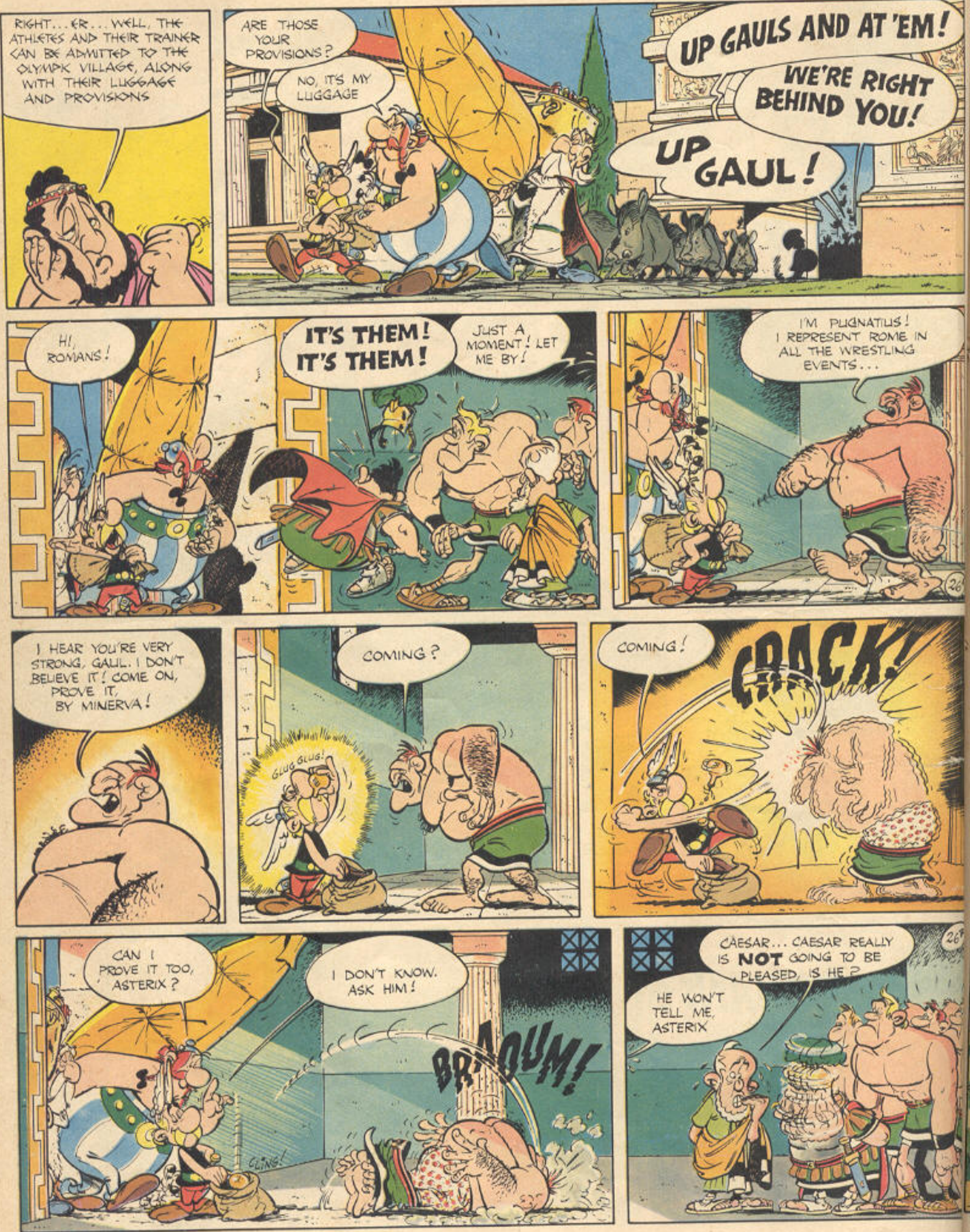


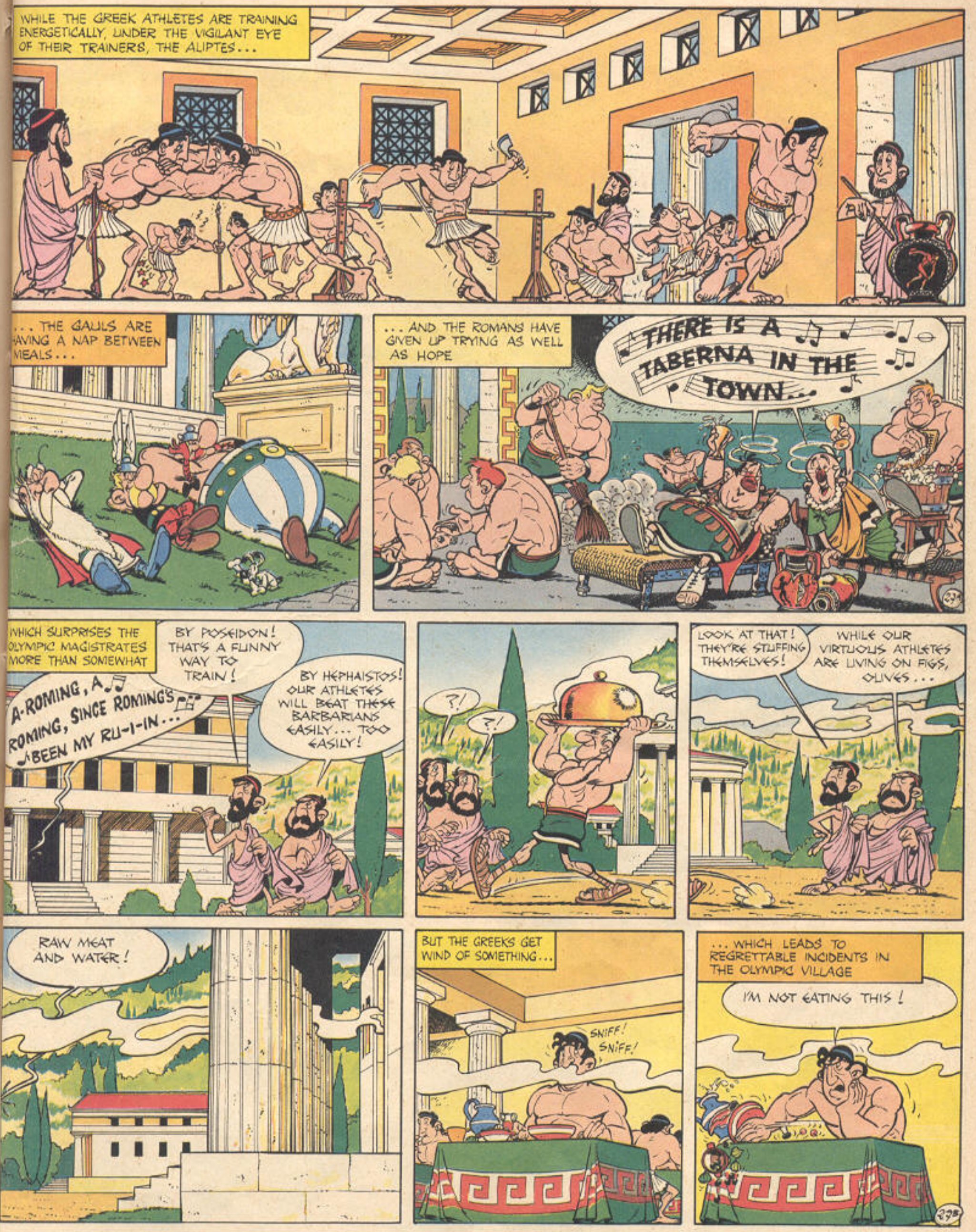
THIS IS OUR LAST NIGHT IN ATHENS. DIABETES TOLD ME ABOUT A GOOD PLACE TO EAT. ONE OF HIS COUSINS IS THE MANAGER...
THEY SEEM TO BE HAVING A GOOD TIME IN THERE!
THEY'RE FOND OF DANCING... I HEAR GREEK DANCES ARE VERY INTERESTING...
INVINOVERITAS
CLAP! CLAP! CLAP! CLAP! CLAP!
YAHOOO! YAHAÃÃA!
?
CLAP! CLAP! CLAP! CLAP! CLAP! CLAP!
CLACK! CLACK! CLACK!
CLAP!
CLAP! CLAP!
COME ON, BOYS! I'M GIVING THEM A DEMONSTRATION OF GAULISH DANCING!
TAP!
AS THE NIGHT GOES ON, OUR FRIENDS ARE INTRODUCED TO THE ART OF GREEK DANCING...
LALA... LALA... LALA... LALA... LALA... LALA...
CLOP! CLOP!
AND FINALLY...
COME ALONG, GERIATRIX. THE SUN WILL SOON BE RISING!
ONE LAST -HIC!- HORN!
I FEEL -HIC!- TEN YEARS YOUNGER!
WELL, THAT MAKES YOU EIGHTY-THREE, AND IT'S TIME YOU WERE IN BED!
UP WITH THE GREEKS!
WHAT'S THAT?
I'LL GO AND SEE
IT'S OUR OPPONENTS, TRAINING!

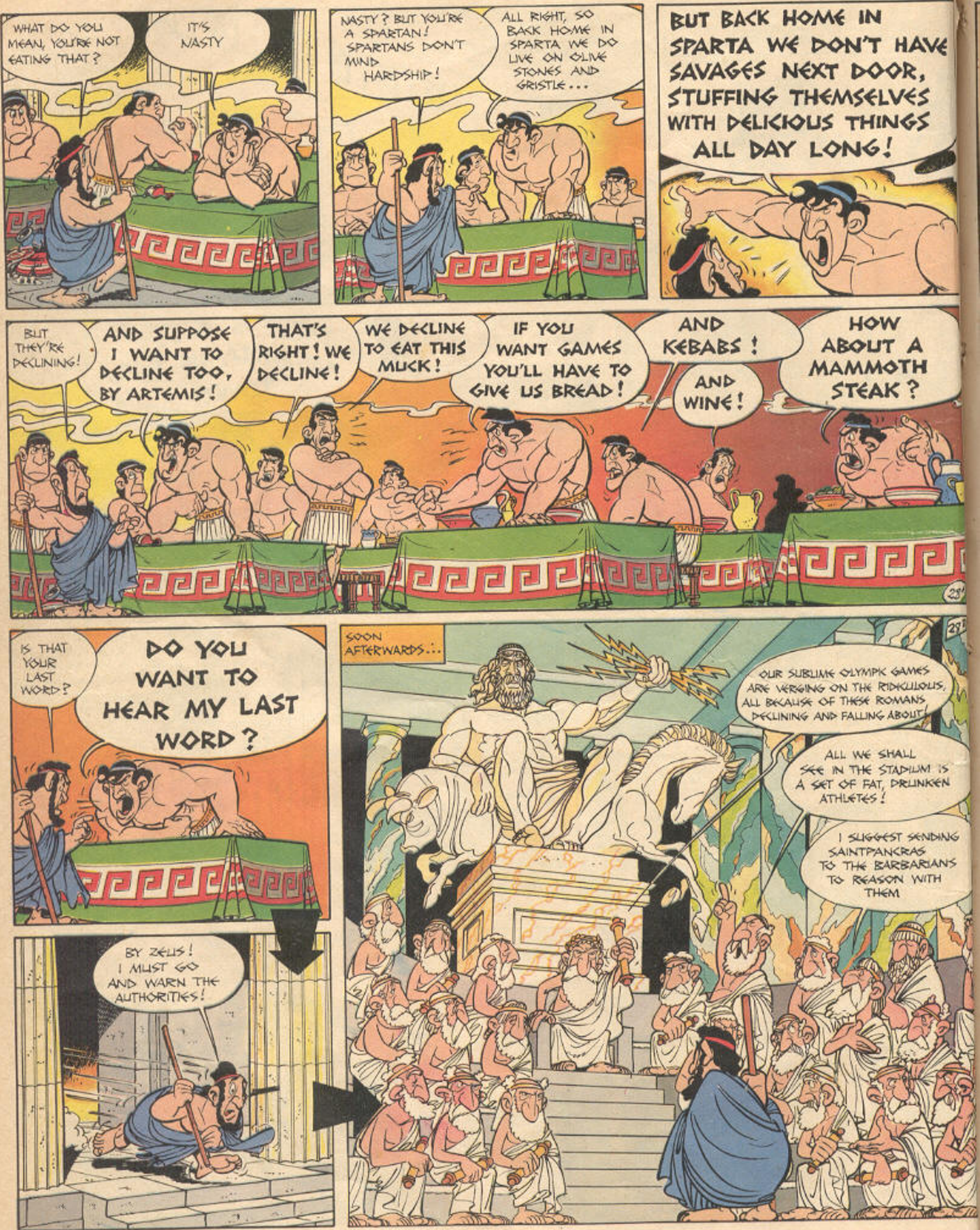


OLYMPIA! OLYMPIA, WITH ITS TEMPLES OF ZEUS, AND PHIDIAS'S STATUE OF THE GOD, ONE OF THE SEVEN WONDERS OF THE WORLD...
IN THE ALTIS, THE SACRED ENCLOSURE, STANDS THE HELLANODIKEON, WHERE THE HELLANODIKAI, THE TEN JUDGES ELECTED BY THE MAGISTRATES OF ELIS, SIT...
... AND THE PRYTANEON, WHICH HOUSES THE MAGISTRATES, OR PRYTANES...
... THE BOULEUTERION, WHERE THE OLYMPIC SENATE SITS...
... AND FINALLY, THE STADIUM! THE TRACK IS 192·27 METRES LONG, THAT IS TO SAY 600 TIMES THE LENGTH OF THE FOOT OF HERACLES...
... WHICH ALLOWS US TO CALCULATE THAT THE DEMI-GOD TOOK ABOUT SIZE 11 IN SHOES
PASSING THROUGH THE NARROW, VAULTED PASSAGE LEADING FROM THE STADIUM, WE COME TO THE GYMNASIUMS, WHERE THE ATHLETES ARE TRAINING, AND WHERE WE FIND MEMBERS OF THE ROMAN TEAM...
DON'T BOTHER, BOYS. WE'VE HAD IT!
THEY'LL MAKE A CLEAN SWEEP OF US!


BY JUPITER, CENTURION, HOW DARE YOU TALK LIKE THAT?
WE HAVE HERE THE FLOWER OF THE ROMAN LEGIONS! ATHLETES PICKED FROM ALL THE GARRISONS OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE! NO ONE CAN BEAT US!
NO ONE? GO ON, TELL HIM, GLUTEUS MAXIMUS!
WELL THERE'S THIS LITTLE GAUL, AND THIS OTHER FAT ONE WITH A CHEST THAT'S SLIPPED A BIT...
AND THEY'RE STUFFED WITH MAGIC POTION! AB-SO-LUTELY INVINCIBLE!
!?
CAESAR WON'T BE PLEASED IF WE DON'T BRING BACK ONE OR TWO PALMS OF VICTORY!
NO, HE WILL NOT BE PLEASED!
AND AT THAT MOMENT, AT THE REGISTRATION DESK...
FOR HERMES' SAKE, WHAT'S THAT?
WE'RE ROMANS. WE'VE COME TO ENTER FOR THE GAMES
ROMANS?
ARE - ARE YOU ALL ATHLETES?
OH NO! THOSE ARE THE ATHLETES- THAT LITTLE FELLOW AND THE GENEROUSLY BUILT ONE
ANCIENT ROME IS REALLY GETTING DECADENT!
I'LL SAY!


RIGHT... ER... WELL, THE ATHLETES AND THEIR TRAINER CAN BE ADMITTED TO THE OLYMPIC VILLAGE, ALONG WITH THEIR LUGGAGE AND PROVISIONS
ARE THOSE YOUR PROVISIONS?
NO, IT'S MY LUGGAGE
UP GAULS AND AT 'EM!
WE'RE RIGHT BEHIND YOU!
UP GAUL!
HI, ROMANS!
IT'S THEM! IT'S THEM!
JUST A MOMENT! LET ME BY!
I'M PUGNATIUS! I REPRESENT ROME IN ALL THE WRESTLING EVENTS...
I HEAR YOU'RE VERY STRONG, GAUL. I DON'T BELIEVE IT! COME ON, PROVE IT, BY MINERVA!
GLUG GLUG!
COMING?
COMING!
CRACK!
CAN I PROVE IT TOO, ASTERIX?
I DON'T KNOW. ASK HIM!
BRAOUM!
CLING!
CAESAR... CAESAR REALLY IS NOT GOING TO BE PLEASED, IS HE?
HE WON'T TELL ME, ASTERIX

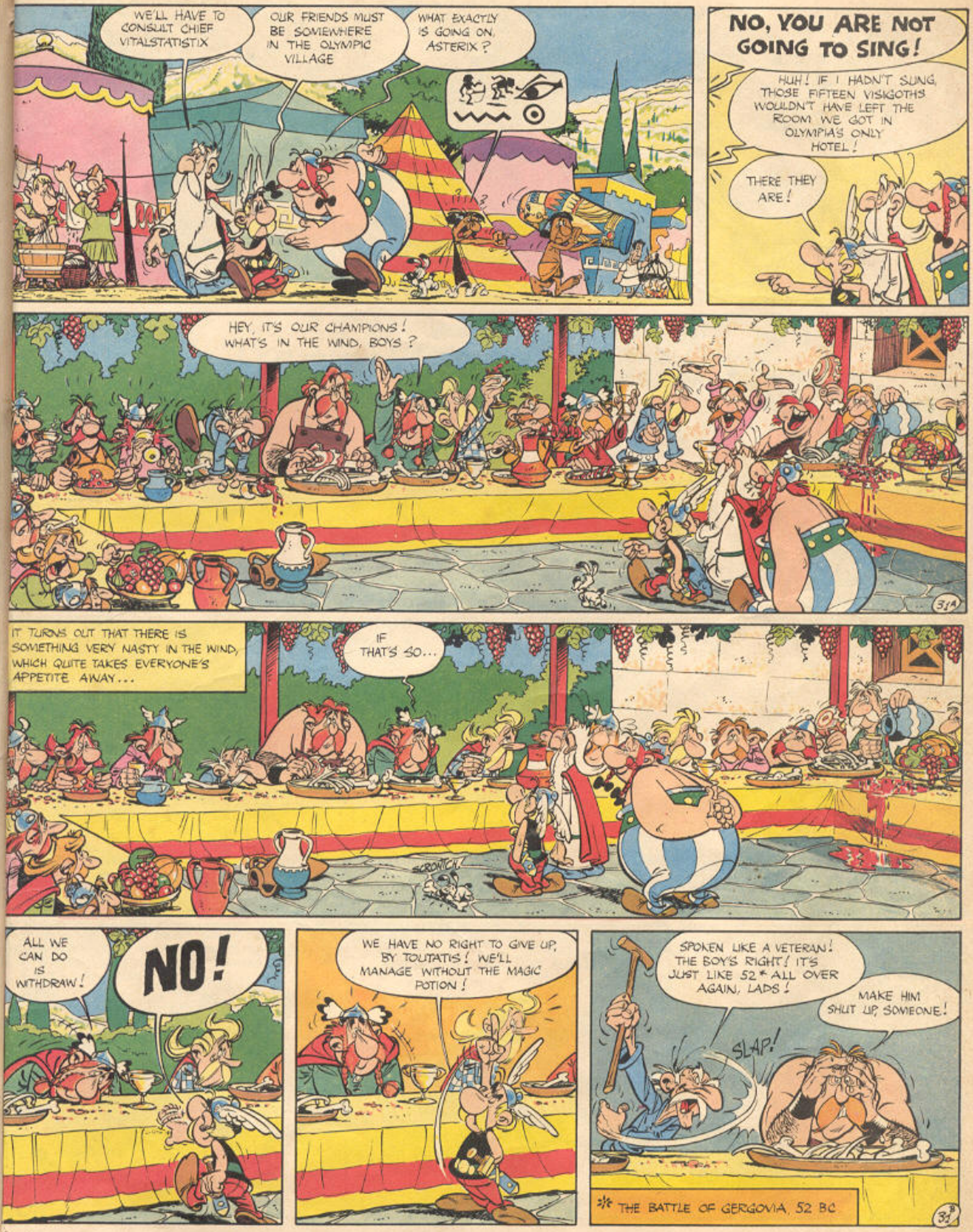

WHILE THE GREEK ATHLETES ARE TRAINING ENERGETICALLY, UNDER THE VIGILANT EYE OF THEIR TRAINERS, THE ALIPTES...
... THE GAULS ARE HAVING A NAP BETWEEN MEALS...
... AND THE ROMANS HAVE GIVEN UP TRYING AS WELL AS HOPE
THERE IS A TABERNA IN THE TOWN...
WHICH SURPRISES THE OLYMPIC MAGISTRATES MORE THAN SOMEWHAT
BY POSEIDON! THAT'S A FUNNY WAY TO TRAIN!
A-ROMING, A-ROMING, SINCE ROMING'S BEEN MY RU-I-IN...
BY HEPHAISTOS! OUR ATHLETES WILL BEAT THESE BARBARIANS EASILY... TOO EASILY!
?!
?!
LOOK AT THAT! THEY'RE STUFFING THEMSELVES!
WHILE OUR VIRTUOUS ATHLETES ARE LIVING ON FIGS, OLIVES...
RAW MEAT AND WATER!
BUT THE GREEKS GET WIND OF SOMETHING...
SNIFF! SNIFF!
... WHICH LEADS TO REGRETTABLE INCIDENTS IN THE OLYMPIC VILLAGE
I'M NOT EATING THIS!



WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU'RE NOT EATING THAT?
IT'S NASTY
NASTY? BUT YOU'RE A SPARTAN! SPARTANS DON'T MIND HARDSHIP!
ALL RIGHT, SO BACK HOME IN SPARTA WE DO LIVE ON OLIVE STONES AND GRISTLE...
BUT BACK HOME IN SPARTA WE DON'T HAVE SAVAGES NEXT DOOR, STUFFING THEMSELVES WITH DELICIOUS THINGS ALL DAY LONG!
BUT THEY'RE DECLINING!
AND SUPPOSE I WANT TO DECLINE TOO, BY ARTEMIS!
THAT'S RIGHT! WE DECLINE!
WE DECLINE TO EAT THIS MUCK!
IF YOU WANT GAMES YOU'LL HAVE TO GIVE US BREAD!
AND KEBABS!
AND WINE!
HOW ABOUT A MAMMOTH STEAK?
IS THAT YOUR LAST WORD?
DO YOU WANT TO HEAR MY LAST WORD?
BY ZEUS! I MUST GO AND WARN THE AUTHORITIES!
SOON AFTERWARDS...
OUR SUBLIME OLYMPIC GAMES ARE VERGING ON THE RIDICULOUS, ALL BECAUSE OF THESE ROMANS DECLINING AND FALLING ABOUT!
ALL WE SHALL SEE IN THE STADIUM IS A SET OF FAT, DRUNKEN ATHLETES!
I SUGGEST SENDING SAINTPANCRAS TO THE BARBARIANS TO REASON WITH THEM


THIS IS WHERE THE ROMANS ARE TRAINING...
I AM SAINTPANCRAS, ONE OF THE OLYMPIC MAGISTRATES...
I SAY, A VISITOR! TAKE A COUCH, OLD MAN! THIRTY-ONE CAN FEAST AS CHEAPLY AS THIRTY!
AREN'T YOU ASHAMED OF YOURSELVES, ROMANS? WHAT WOULD JULIUS CAESAR SAY IF HE COULD SEE YOU?
HE WOULDN'T BE PLEASED, EH?
YOU MAY THINK WINE WILL INCREASE YOUR POWERS...
TEE HEE HEE HEE HEE!
29A
BUT DON'T FORGET THE RULES: ALL ARTIFICIAL STIMULANTS ARE FORBIDDEN ON PENALTY OF DISQUALIFICATION!
THAT'SH RIGHT, THAT'SH RIGHT! CHEERSH!
PFFCHCH
HEY, YOU! WAIT FOR ME, BY JUPITER!
?
SOON AFTERWARDS...
THERE THEY ARE!
?
?
29B


THAT'S THEM!
IS IT TRUE THAT YOU POSSESS A MAGIC POTION, AND YOU INTEND TO TAKE IT BEFORE THE GAMES?
YES, THAT'S RIGHT
SUCH PROCEDURES ARE STRICTLY FORBIDDEN!
STRICTLY?
STRICTLY!
STRICTLY.
ER... IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, I'D LIKE TO APPLY FOR PERMISSION TO LEAVE THE SACRED ENCLOSURE AND CONSULT OUR FRIENDS
GRANTED!
HO, HO, HO! I'M OFF TO GIVE THE OTHERS THE GOOD NEWS!
GET UP, EVERYONE! STAND TO ATTENTION! TO WORK! YOU BARBARIC LOT! GLUTEUS MAXIMUS! PULL YOUR SOCCI UP! AND JUMP TO IT!
BUT THIS IS ONLY THE EIGHTH COURSE...
SO MUCH FOR THE EIGHTH COURSE!
AH, THE DISCOBOLI HAVE STARTED TRAINING AGAIN AT LAST

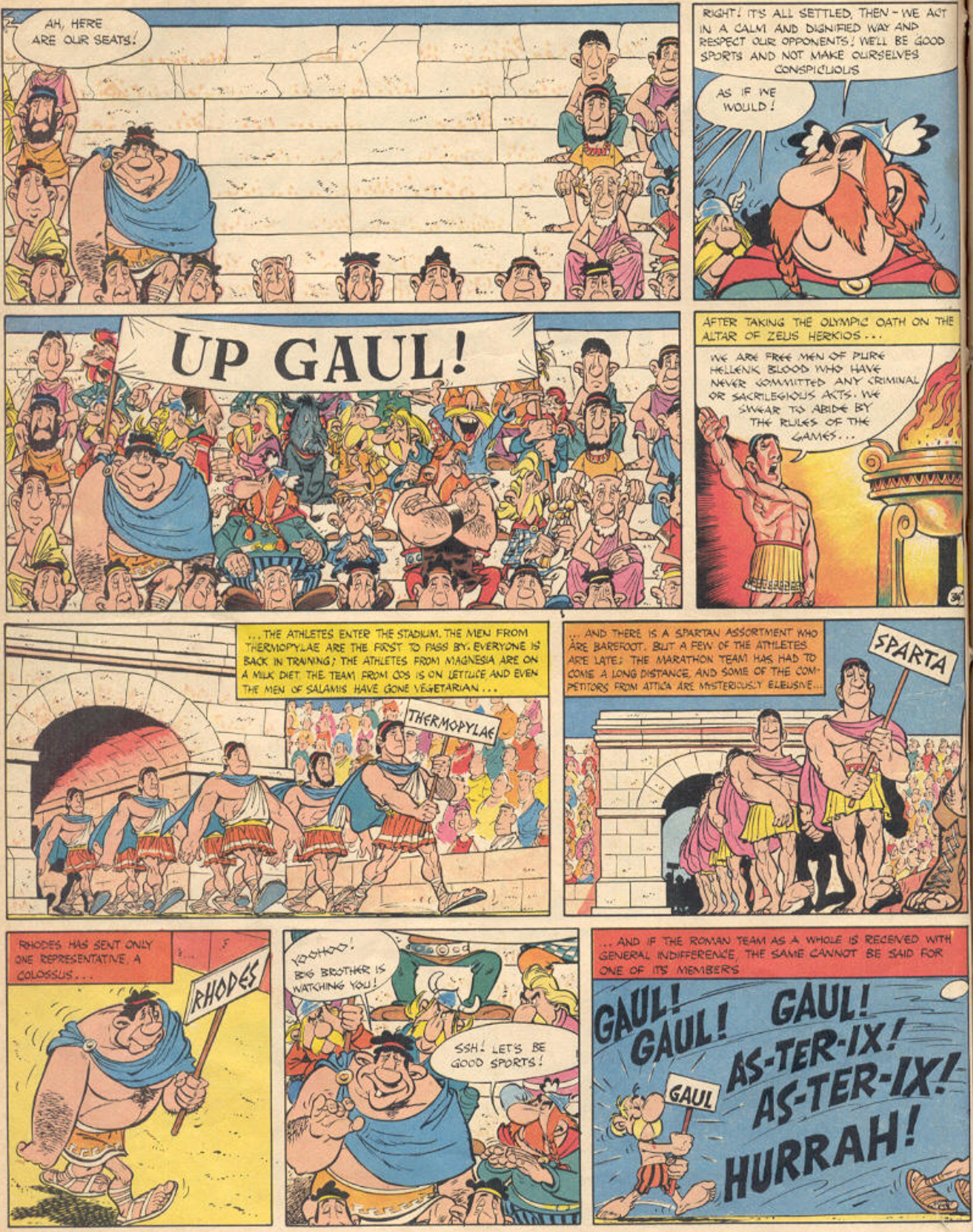


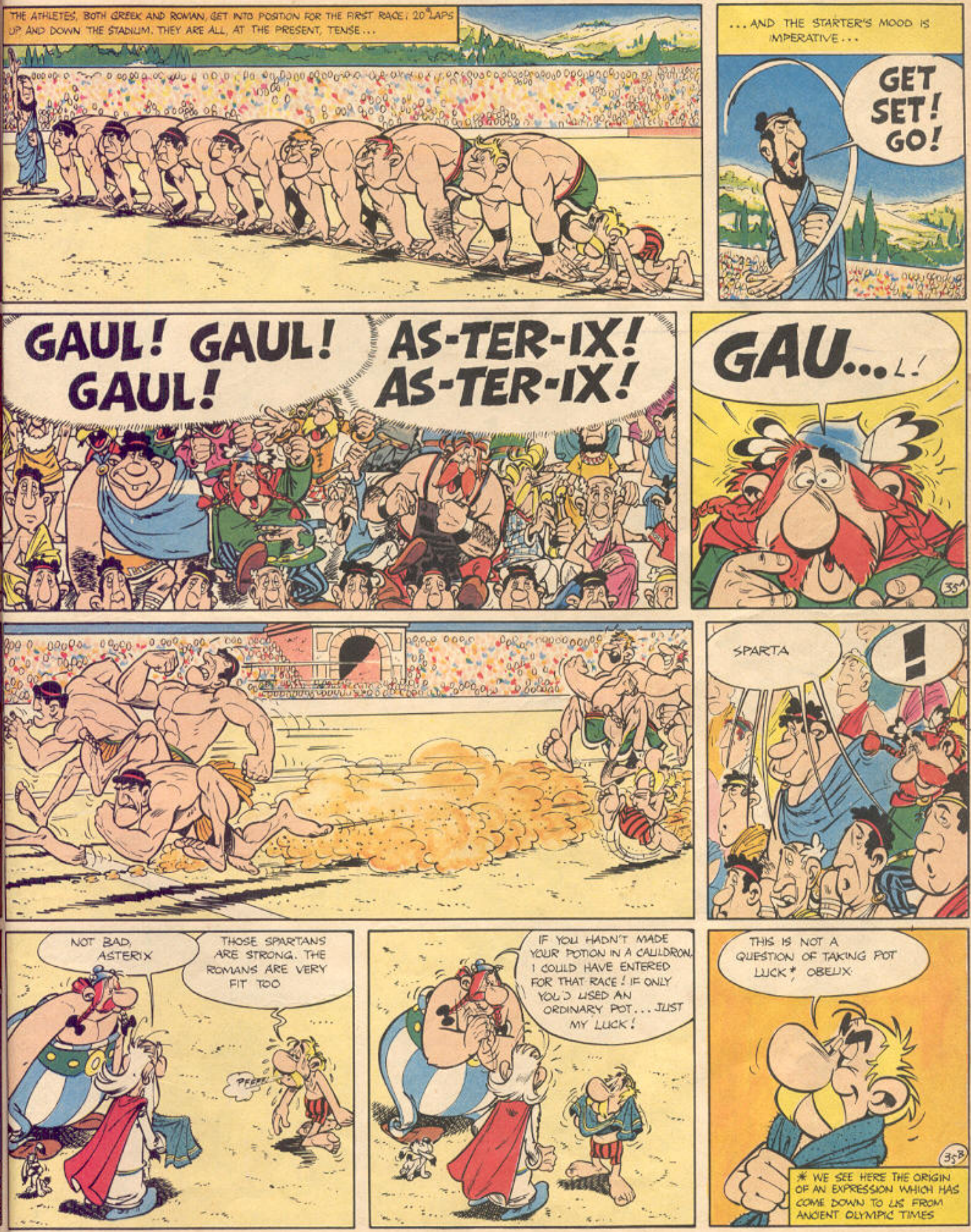
WE'LL HAVE TO CONSULT CHIEF VITALSTATISTIX
OUR FRIENDS MUST BE SOMEWHERE IN THE OLYMPIC VILLAGE
WHAT EXACTLY IS GOING ON, ASTERIX?
NO, YOU ARE NOT GOING TO SING!
HUH! IF I HADN'T SUNG, THOSE FIFTEEN VISIGOTHS WOULDN'T HAVE LEFT THE ROOM WE GOT IN OLYMPIA'S ONLY HOTEL!
THERE THEY ARE!
HEY, IT'S OUR CHAMPIONS! WHAT'S IN THE WIND, BOYS?
IT TURNS OUT THAT THERE IS SOMETHING VERY NASTY IN THE WIND, WHICH QUITE TAKES EVERYONE'S APPETITE AWAY...
IF THAT'S SO...
SCRONTCH
ALL WE CAN DO IS WITHDRAW!
NO!
WE HAVE NO RIGHT TO GIVE UP, BY TOUTATIS! WE'LL MANAGE WITHOUT THE MAGIC POTION!
SPOKEN LIKE A VETERAN! THE BOY'S RIGHT! IT'S JUST LIKE 52* ALL OVER AGAIN, LADS!
MAKE HIM SHUT UP, SOMEONE!
SLAP!
* THE BATTLE OF GERGOVIA, 52 BC

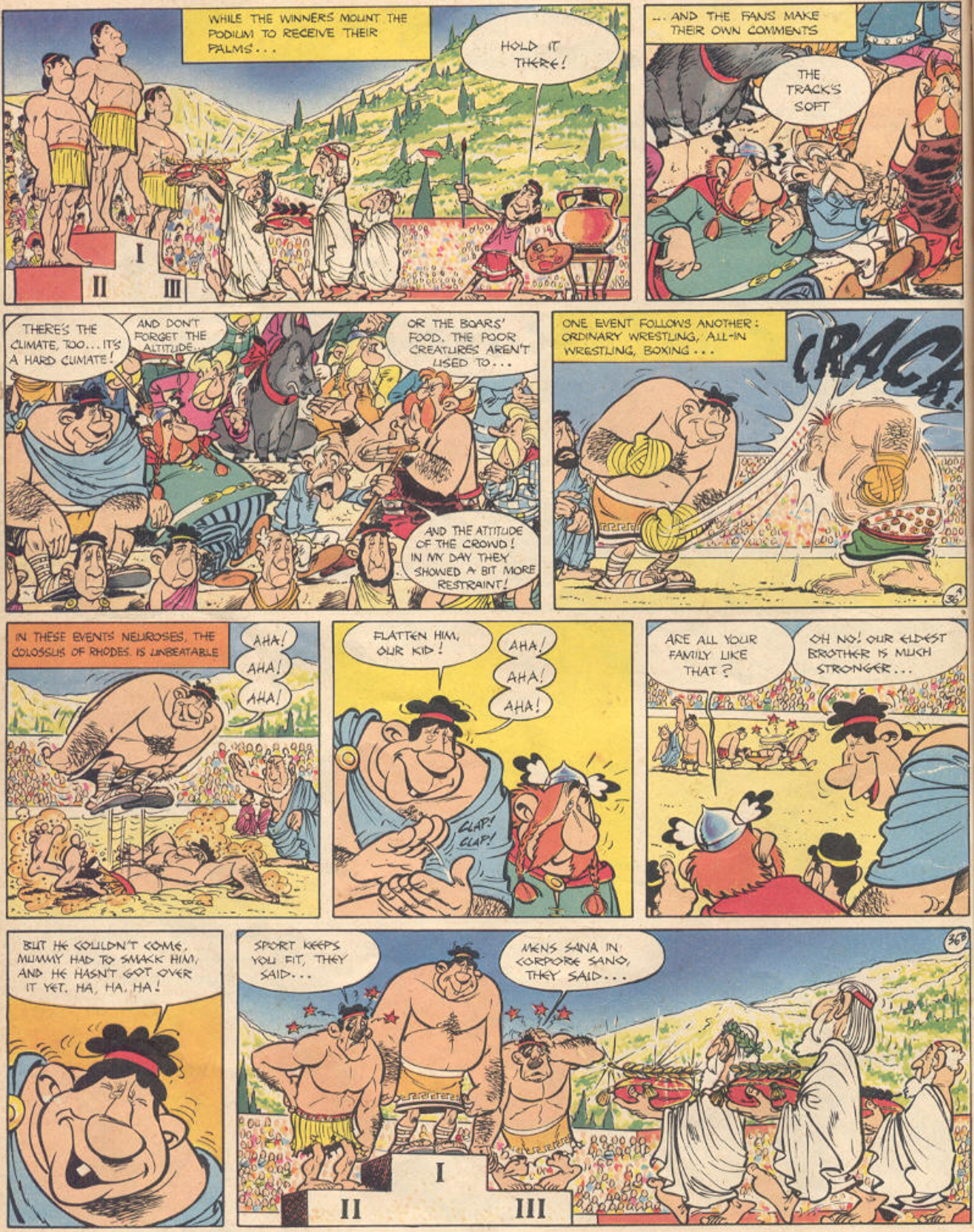

OBELIX COULD COMPETE ON HIS OWN...
WHY ON MY OWN?
NO, NO! IT WOULDN'T BE FAIR
WHAT WOULDN'T BE FAIR?
HE FELL INTO THE CAULDRON OF MAGIC POTION WHEN HE WAS A BABY...
!?!
JUST A MINUTE!
YOU MEAN I'M NOT ALLOWED TO COMPETE IN THE GAMES BECAUSE I FELL INTO A CAULDRON WHEN I WAS A BABY?
PRECISELY!
RIGHT! THAT WAS ALL I WANTED TO KNOW!
NO ONE EVER EXPLAINS ANYTHING TO ME
?!
WELL, THEN, THIS IS WHAT WE'LL DO. WE KEEP ASTERIX ENTERED FOR THE GAMES. GETAFIX AND OBELIX WILL ACT AS HIS TRAINERS... AND WE MUST TRUST IN THE GODS!
HAVE NO FEAR, BOYS! WITH US TO CHEER HIM ON, ASTERIX CAN'T LOSE!
WON'T SOMEONE PLEASE MAKE HIM SHUT UP?
ONE PALM OF VICTORY WOULD DO... YOU'LL COMPETE ONLY IN THE TRACK EVENTS
LET'S GET BACK TO THE ENCLOSURE, FAST. I'M IN A HURRY TO START TRAINING
FUNNY, ALL THE SAME, THIS DISCRIMINATORY ANTI-POT RULE!

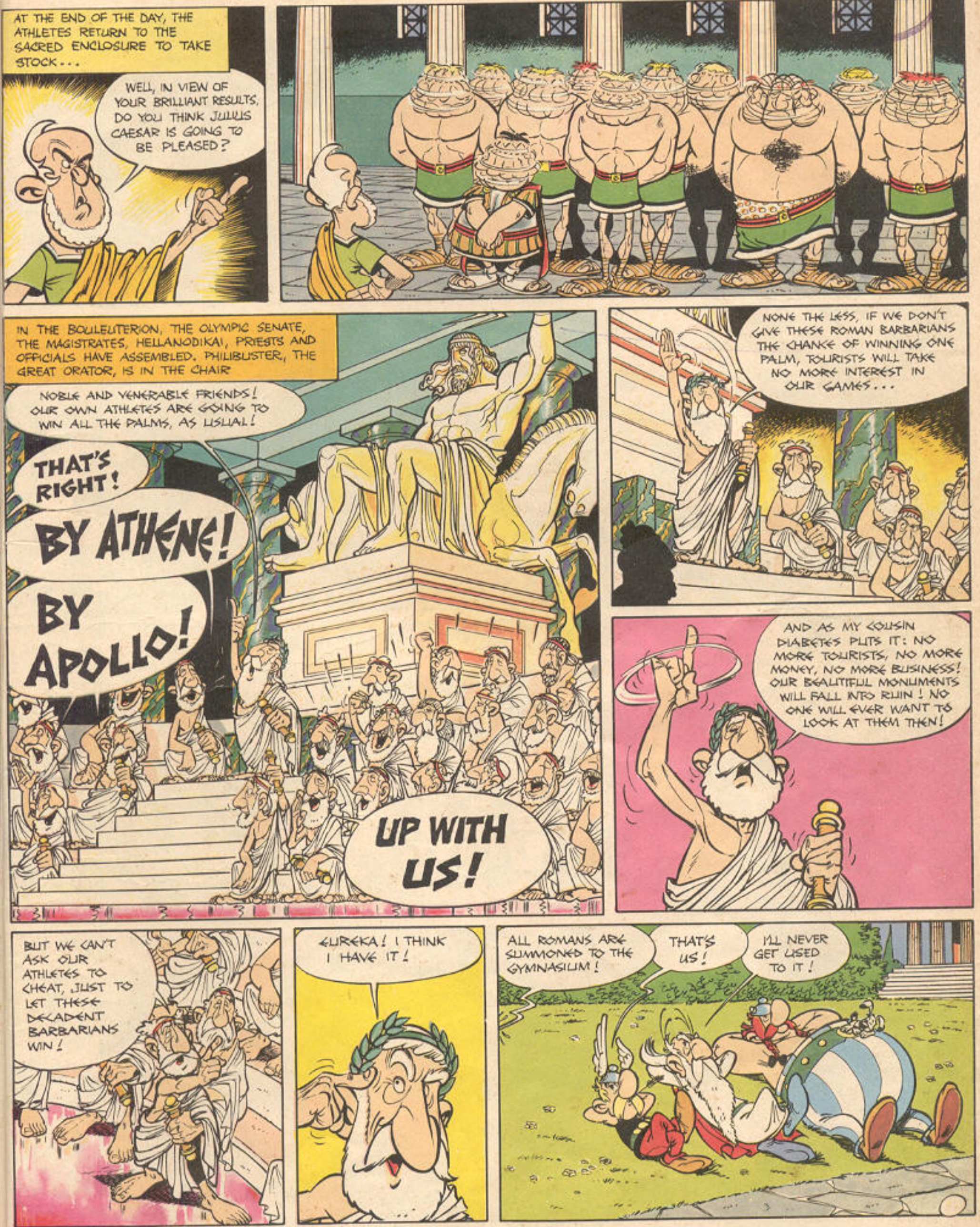


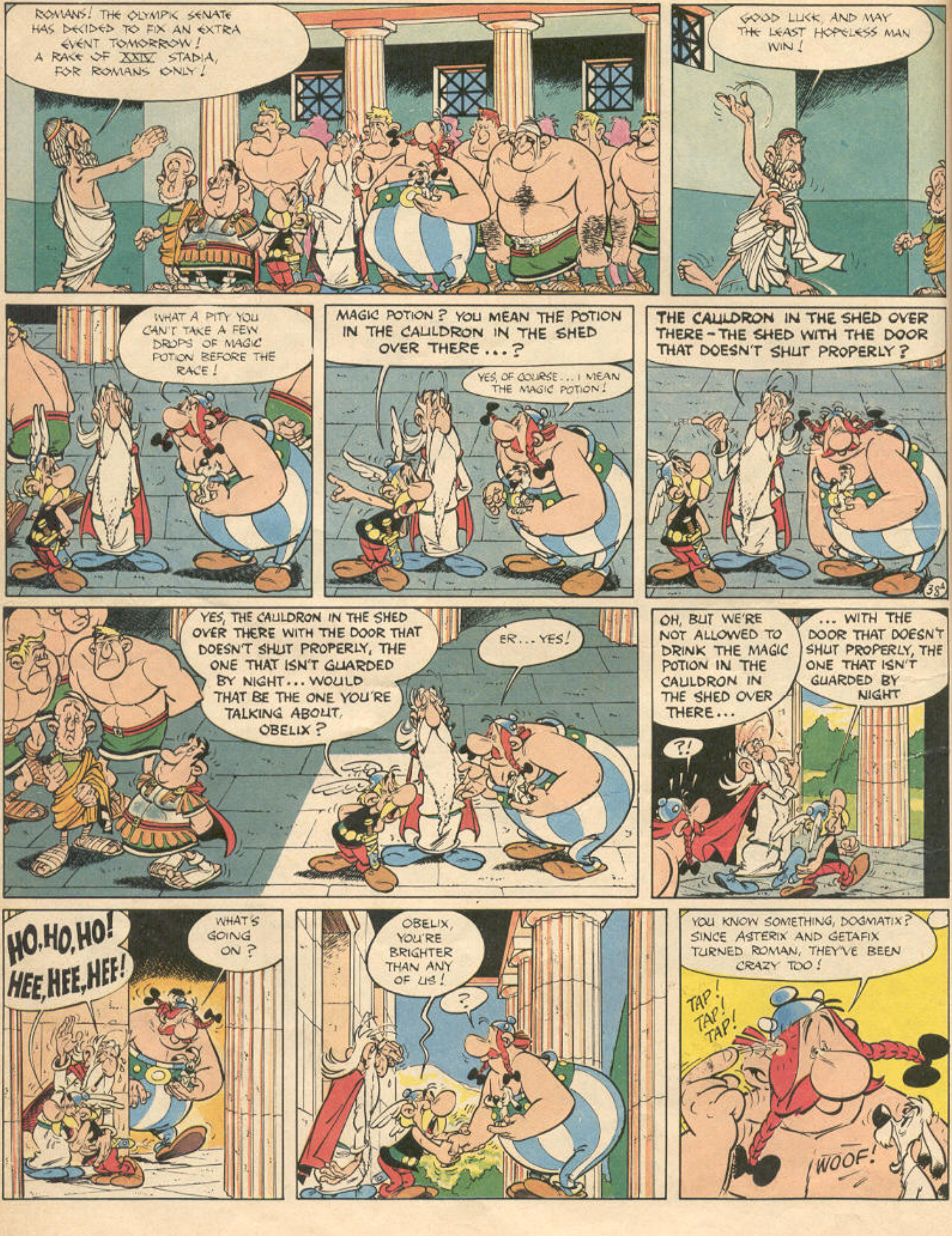
I'LL SPRINT ROUND THE TRACK. SAND ME, WILL YOU?
HMM... NOT BAD, BUT IS IT GOOD ENOUGH TO BEAT THOSE HIGHLY TRAINED ATHLETES?
HOW ABOUT USING FINER SAND?
LET'S GO TO BED. THE GAMES BEGIN TOMORROW... I FEEL FULL OF CONFIDENCE!
AND HOW ABOUT TELLING THEM I FELL INTO AN AMPHORA INSTEAD OF A CAULDRON?
THAT NIGHT, IN THE SACRED ENCLOSURE, ALL THE ATHLETES DREAM OF HONOUR AND VICTORY...
II
I
I
II
I
THE GREAT DAY DAWNS! SPECTATORS ARRIVE FROM ALL OVER THE CIVILIZED WORLD... MEN ONLY, FOR WOMEN ARE FORBIDDEN TO WATCH THE OLYMPIC GAMES
ONE OF THESE DAYS YOU'LL SEE! WOMEN WILL TAKE PART IN THE GAMES! NOT JUST AS SPECTATORS, EITHER!
YES, AND I SUPPOSE THEY'LL BE DRIVING CHARIOTS TOO!

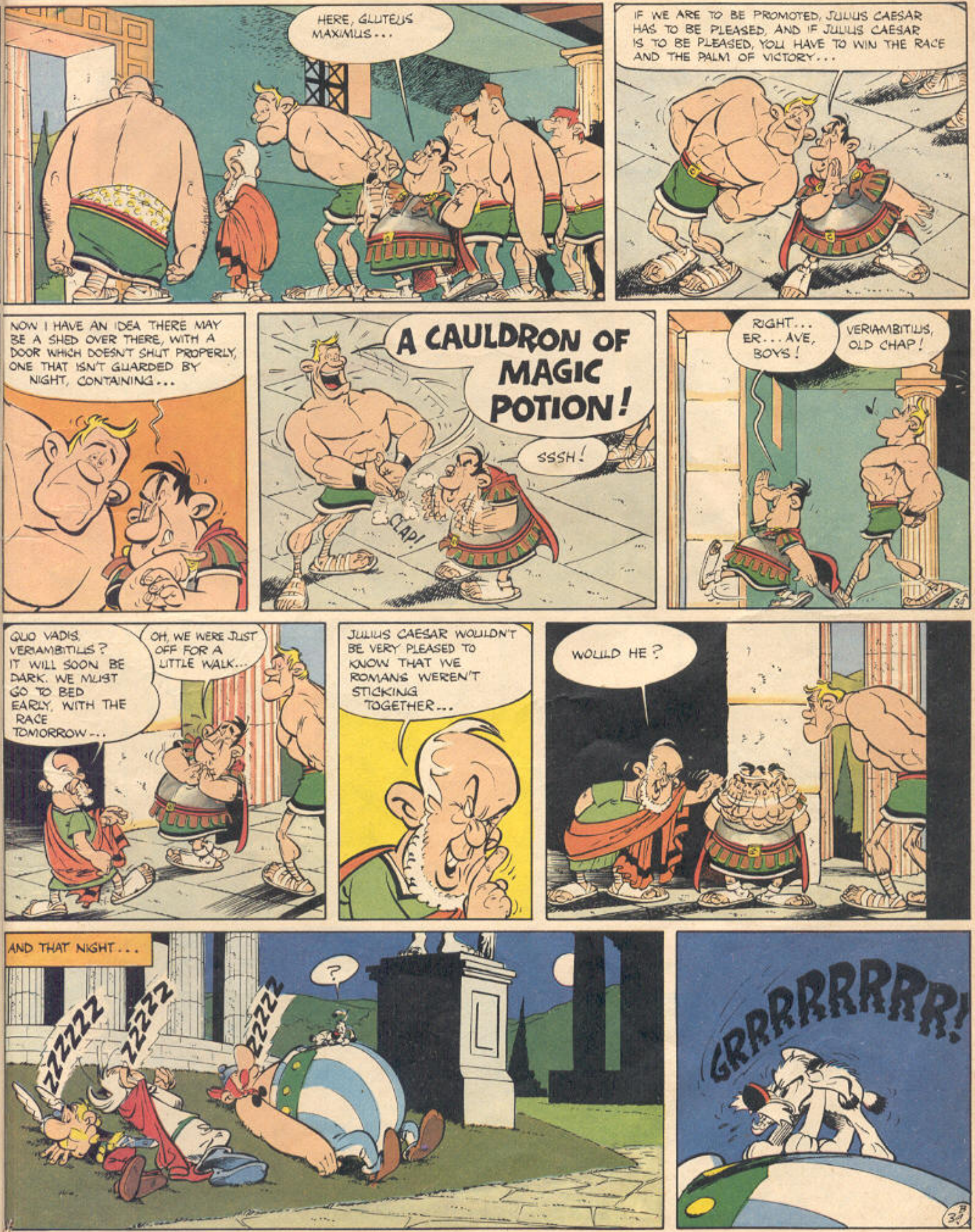

AH, HERE ARE OUR SEATS!
RIGHT! IT'S ALL SETTLED, THEN - WE ACT IN A CALM AND DIGNIFIED WAY AND RESPECT OUR OPPONENTS! WE'LL BE GOOD SPORTS AND NOT MAKE OURSELVES CONSPICUOUS
AS IF WE WOULD!
UP GAUL!
AFTER TAKING THE OLYMPIC OATH ON THE ALTAR OF ZEUS HERKIOS ...
WE ARE FREE MEN OF PURE HELLENIC BLOOD WHO HAVE NEVER COMMITTED ANY CRIMINAL OR SACRILEGIOUS ACTS. WE SWEAR TO ABIDE BY THE RULES OF THE GAMES ...
... THE ATHLETES ENTER THE STADIUM. THE MEN FROM THERMOPYLAE ARE THE FIRST TO PASS BY. EVERYONE IS BACK IN TRAINING; THE ATHLETES FROM MAGNESIA ARE ON A MILK DIET THE TEAM FROM COS IS ON LETTUCE AND EVEN THE MEN OF SALAMIS HAVE GONE VEGETARIAN ...
THERMOPYLAE
... AND THERE IS A SPARTAN ASSORTMENT WHO ARE BAREFOOT. BUT A FEW OF THE ATHLETES ARE LATE: THE MARATHON TEAM HAS HAD TO COME A LONG DISTANCE, AND SOME OF THE COMPETITORS FROM ATTICA ARE MYSTERIOUSLY ELEUSIVE ...
SPARTA
RHODES HAS SENT ONLY ONE REPRESENTATIVE, A COLOSSUS ...
RHODES
YOOHOO! BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU!
SSH! LET'S BE GOOD SPORTS!
... AND IF THE ROMAN TEAM AS A WHOLE IS RECEIVED WITH GENERAL INDIFFERENCE, THE SAME CANNOT BE SAID FOR ONE OF ITS MEMBERS
GAUL! GAUL! GAUL!
AS-TER-IX! AS-TER-IX!
HURRAH!
GAUL


THE ATHLETES, BOTH GREEK AND ROMAN, GET INTO POSITION FOR THE FIRST RACE: 20 LAPS UP AND DOWN THE STADIUM. THEY ARE ALL, AT THE PRESENT, TENSE...
... AND THE STARTER'S MOOD IS IMPERATIVE...
GET SET! GO!
GAUL! GAUL! GAUL!
AS-TER-IX! AS-TER-IX!
GAU...L!
SPARTA
!
NOT BAD, ASTERIX
THOSE SPARTANS ARE STRONG. THE ROMANS ARE VERY FIT TOO
PFFF
IF YOU HADN'T MADE YOUR POTION IN A CAULDRON, I COULD HAVE ENTERED FOR THAT RACE! IF ONLY YOU'D USED AN ORDINARY POT... JUST MY LUCK!
THIS IS NOT A QUESTION OF TAKING POT LUCK*, OBELIX.
* WE SEE HERE THE ORIGIN OF AN EXPRESSION WHICH HAS COME DOWN TO US FROM ANCIENT OLYMPIC TIMES

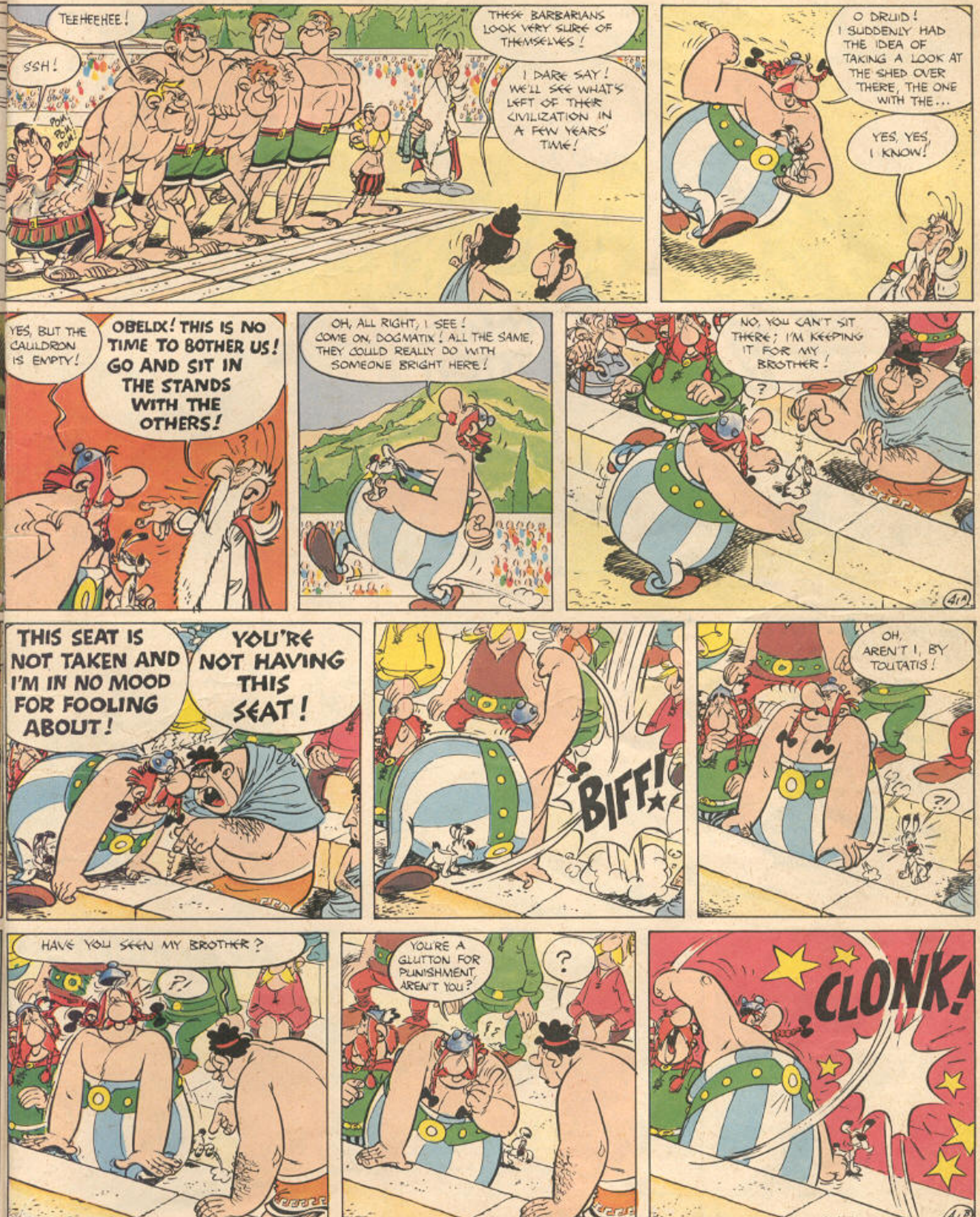

WHILE THE WINNERS MOUNT THE PODIUM TO RECEIVE THEIR PALMS...
HOLD IT THERE!
I
II
III
... AND THE FANS MAKE THEIR OWN COMMENTS
THE TRACK'S SOFT
THERE'S THE CLIMATE, TOO... IT'S A HARD CLIMATE!
AND DON'T FORGET THE ALTITUDE...
OR THE BOARS' FOOD. THE POOR CREATURES AREN'T USED TO...
AND THE ATTITUDE OF THE CROWD! IN MY DAY THEY SHOWED A BIT MORE RESTRAINT!
ONE EVENT FOLLOWS ANOTHER: ORDINARY WRESTLING, ALL-IN WRESTLING, BOXING...
CRACK!
IN THESE EVENTS NEUROSES, THE COLOSSUS OF RHODES, IS UNBEATABLE
AHA! AHA! AHA!
FLATTEN HIM, OUR KID!
AHA! AHA! AHA!
CLAP! CLAP!
ARE ALL YOUR FAMILY LIKE THAT?
OH NO! OUR ELDEST BROTHER IS MUCH STRONGER...
BUT HE COULDN'T COME. MUMMY HAD TO SMACK HIM, AND HE HASN'T GOT OVER IT YET. HA, HA, HA!
SPORT KEEPS YOU FIT, THEY SAID...
MENS SANA IN CORPORE SANO, THEY SAID...
I
II
III


AT THE END OF THE DAY, THE ATHLETES RETURN TO THE SACRED ENCLOSURE TO TAKE STOCK...
WELL, IN VIEW OF YOUR BRILLIANT RESULTS, DO YOU THINK JULIUS CAESAR IS GOING TO BE PLEASED?
IN THE BOULEUTERION, THE OLYMPIC SENATE, THE MAGISTRATES, HELLANODIKAI, PRIESTS AND OFFICIALS HAVE ASSEMBLED. PHILIBUSTER, THE GREAT ORATOR, IS IN THE CHAIR
NOBLE AND VENERABLE FRIENDS! OUR OWN ATHLETES ARE GOING TO WIN ALL THE PALMS, AS USUAL!
THAT'S RIGHT!
BY ATHENE!
BY APOLLO!
UP WITH US!
NONE THE LESS, IF WE DON'T GIVE THESE ROMAN BARBARIANS THE CHANCE OF WINNING ONE PALM, TOURISTS WILL TAKE NO MORE INTEREST IN OUR GAMES...
AND AS MY COUSIN DIABETES PUTS IT: NO MORE TOURISTS, NO MORE MONEY, NO MORE BUSINESS! OUR BEAUTIFUL MONUMENTS WILL FALL INTO RUIN! NO ONE WILL EVER WANT TO LOOK AT THEM THEN!
BUT WE CAN'T ASK OUR ATHLETES TO CHEAT, JUST TO LET THESE DECADENT BARBARIANS WIN!
EUREKA! I THINK I HAVE IT!
ALL ROMANS ARE SUMMONED TO THE GYMNASIUM!
THAT'S US!
I'LL NEVER GET USED TO IT!

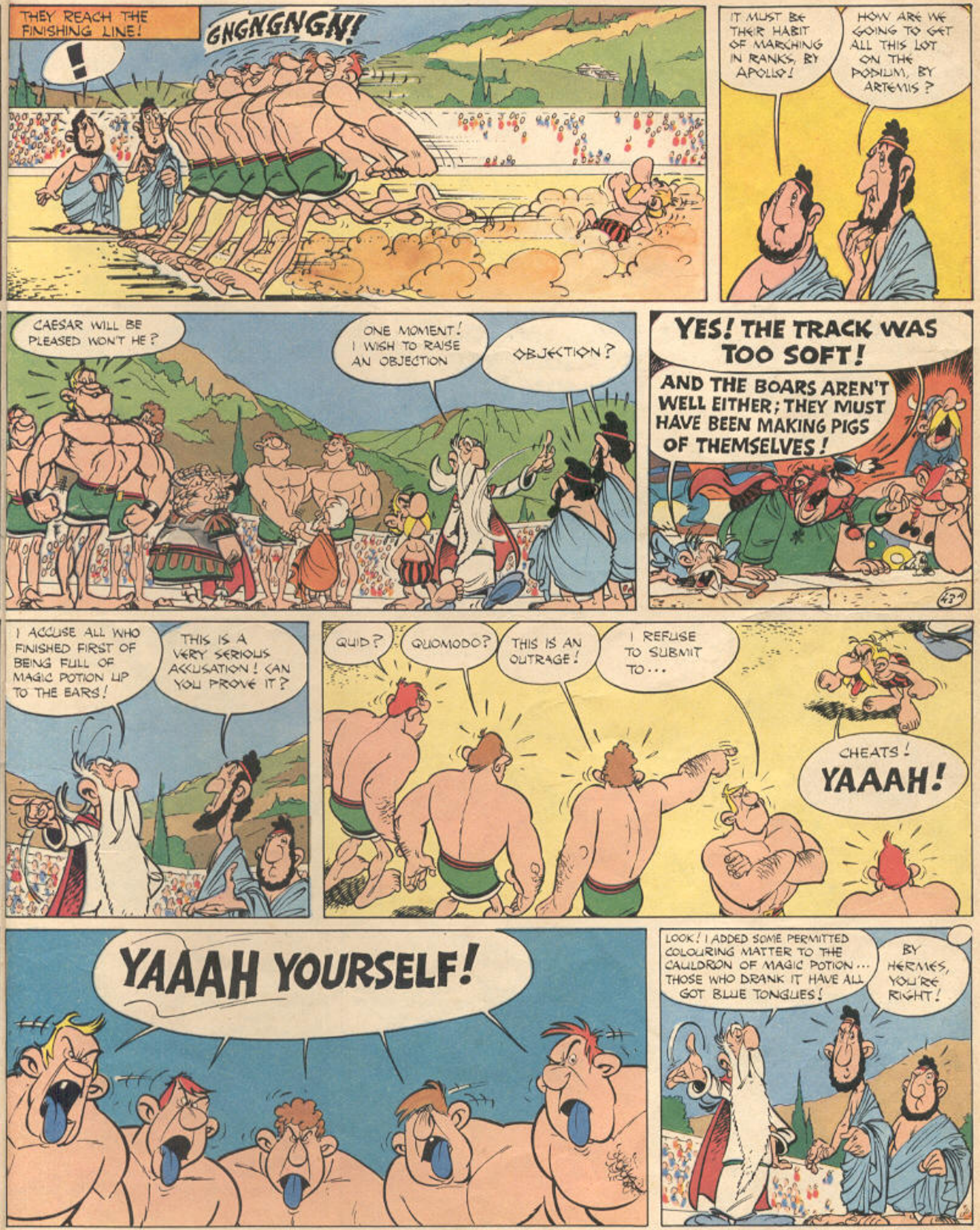

ROMANS! THE OLYMPIC SENATE HAS DECIDED TO FIX AN EXTRA EVENT TOMORROW! A RACE OF XXIV STADIA, FOR ROMANS ONLY!
GOOD LUCK, AND MAY THE LEAST HOPELESS MAN WIN!
WHAT A PITY YOU CAN'T TAKE A FEW DROPS OF MAGIC POTION BEFORE THE RACE!
MAGIC POTION? YOU MEAN THE POTION IN THE CAULDRON IN THE SHED OVER THERE...?
YES, OF COURSE... I MEAN THE MAGIC POTION!
THE CAULDRON IN THE SHED OVER THERE - THE SHED WITH THE DOOR THAT DOESN'T SHUT PROPERLY?
YES, THE CAULDRON IN THE SHED OVER THERE WITH THE DOOR THAT DOESN'T SHUT PROPERLY, THE ONE THAT ISN'T GUARDED BY NIGHT... WOULD THAT BE THE ONE YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, OBELIX?
ER... YES!
OH, BUT WE'RE NOT ALLOWED TO DRINK THE MAGIC POTION IN THE CAULDRON IN THE SHED OVER THERE...
... WITH THE DOOR THAT DOESN'T SHUT PROPERLY, THE ONE THAT ISN'T GUARDED BY NIGHT
?!
HO,HO,HO! HEE,HEE,HEE!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
OBELIX, YOU'RE BRIGHTER THAN ANY OF US!
?
YOU KNOW SOMETHING, DOGMATIX? SINCE ASTERIX AND GETAFIX TURNED ROMAN, THEY'VE BEEN CRAZY TOO!
TAP! TAP! TAP!
WOOF!


HERE, GLUTEUS MAXIMUS...
IF WE ARE TO BE PROMOTED, JULIUS CAESAR HAS TO BE PLEASED, AND IF JULIUS CAESAR IS TO BE PLEASED, YOU HAVE TO WIN THE RACE AND THE PALM OF VICTORY...
NOW I HAVE AN IDEA THERE MAY BE A SHED OVER THERE, WITH A DOOR WHICH DOESN'T SHUT PROPERLY, ONE THAT ISN'T GUARDED BY NIGHT, CONTAINING...
A CAULDRON OF MAGIC POTION!
SSSH!
CLAP!
RIGHT... ER... AVE, BOYS!
VERIAMBITIUS, OLD CHAP!
QUO VADIS, VERIAMBITIUS? IT WILL SOON BE DARK. WE MUST GO TO BED EARLY, WITH THE RACE TOMORROW...
OH, WE WERE JUST OFF FOR A LITTLE WALK...
JULIUS CAESAR WOULDN'T BE VERY PLEASED TO KNOW THAT WE ROMANS WEREN'T STICKING TOGETHER...
WOULD HE?
AND THAT NIGHT...
ZZZZZZ
ZZZZZ
ZZZZZ
?
GRRRRRRRR!


?
GRRRRRR!
HEY! DOGMATIX HAS JUST WOKEN ME UP! THERE ARE LOTS OF PEOPLE PROWLING OVER THERE, BY THE SHED WITH THE DOOR WHICH DOESN'T SHUT PROPERLY, THE ONE THAT ISN'T GUARDED BY NIGHT, CONTAINING THE CAULDRON OF MAGIC POTION . . .
DOGMATIX IS A GREAT WATCHDOG!
WELL, YOU TELL YOUR GREAT WATCHDOG TO GO BACK TO SLEEP, AND MIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS!
BUT THEY MIGHT STEAL THE CAULDRON!
THEFT OF CAULDRONS IS NOT A CRIME AMONG THE HELLENES
?!
DO YOU UNDERSTAND ANYTHING AT ALL ABOUT THE CAULDRON LAWS IN THESE PARTS, DOGMATIX?
THESE HELLENES ARE CRAZY!
COCKADOODLEDOS!
IT IS THE DAY OF THE 24 STADIA RACE, I.E. 4,614 METRES, 48 CENTIMETRES, OR AS WE MIGHT PUT IT MORE SIMPLY TODAY, 14,400 SIZE 11 SHOES LAID END TO END
ALL COMPETITORS ON THE STARTING GROOVES!


TEEHEEHEE!
SSH!
POM POM POM
THESE BARBARIANS LOOK VERY SURE OF THEMSELVES!
I DARE SAY! WE'LL SEE WHAT'S LEFT OF THEIR CIVILIZATION IN A FEW YEARS' TIME!
O DRUID! I SUDDENLY HAD THE IDEA OF TAKING A LOOK AT THE SHED OVER THERE, THE ONE WITH THE...
YES, YES, I KNOW!
YES, BUT THE CAULDRON IS EMPTY!
OBELIX! THIS IS NO TIME TO BOTHER US! GO AND SIT IN THE STANDS WITH THE OTHERS!
OH, ALL RIGHT, I SEE! COME ON, DOGMATIX! ALL THE SAME, THEY COULD REALLY DO WITH SOMEONE BRIGHT HERE!
NO, YOU CAN'T SIT THERE; I'M KEEPING IT FOR MY BROTHER!
?
THIS SEAT IS NOT TAKEN AND I'M IN NO MOOD FOR FOOLING ABOUT!
YOU'RE NOT HAVING THIS SEAT!
BIFF!
OH, AREN'T I, BY TOUTATIS!
?!
HAVE YOU SEEN MY BROTHER?
?!
YOU'RE A GLUTTON FOR PUNISHMENT, AREN'T YOU?
?
CLONK!


READY?
I'LL SAY!
TEEHEEHEE!
WELL, WHAT ABOUT IT, BY JUPITER?
GET SET! GO!
THEY'RE OFF!
IN THE STANDS, THE ENTHUSIASM...
UP GAUL!
AS-TER-IX! AS-TER-IX!
COME ON, TITCH!
GROUIK!
IF THEY ONLY KNEW... BUT NO ONE EVER LISTENS TO ME!
... IS BEYOND BELIEF!
AHA, AHA, AHA!
BUT THE RACE SOON TAKES A STRANGE TURN...
THE TRACK REALLY IS SOFT!
ASTERIX MUST HAVE EATEN A BOAR WHICH MUST HAVE EATEN SOMETHING...
THIS IS ALL TOPSY-TURVY!
... FOR ONE OF THE COMPETITORS IS ABOUT TO BE LAPPED BY ALL THE OTHERS, AN UNHEARD-OF EVENT!
BRRROOOM!


THEY REACH THE FINISHING LINE!
GNGNGNGN!
!
IT MUST BE THEIR HABIT OF MARCHING IN RANKS, BY APOLLO!
HOW ARE WE GOING TO GET ALL THIS LOT ON THE PODIUM, BY ARTEMIS?
CAESAR WILL BE PLEASED WON'T HE?
ONE MOMENT! I WISH TO RAISE AN OBJECTION
OBJECTION?
YES! THE TRACK WAS TOO SOFT!
AND THE BOARS AREN'T WELL EITHER; THEY MUST HAVE BEEN MAKING PIGS OF THEMSELVES!
I ACCUSE ALL WHO FINISHED FIRST OF BEING FULL OF MAGIC POTION UP TO THE EARS!
THIS IS A VERY SERIOUS ACCUSATION! CAN YOU PROVE IT?
QUID?
QUOMODO?
THIS IS AN OUTRAGE!
I REFUSE TO SUBMIT TO...
CHEATS! YAAAH!
YAAAH YOURSELF!
LOOK! I ADDED SOME PERMITTED COLOURING MATTER TO THE CAULDRON OF MAGIC POTION... THOSE WHO DRANK IT HAVE ALL GOT BLUE TONGUES!
BY HERMES, YOU'RE RIGHT!



WE OUGHT TO HAVE HELD OUR TONGUES!
I'M FEELING RATHER BLUE MYSELF!
THE OLYMPIC SENATE WILL CONSIDER THIS UNPRECEDENTED SITUATION!
WINK! WINK!
A FEW MINUTES LATER...
ALL COMPETITORS WHO DRANK THE MAGIC POTION ARE DISQUALIFIED! THE PALM OF VICTORY IS THEREFORE AWARDED TO... ASTERIX!
ASTERIX! HURRAH FOR ASTERIX!
I ALWAYS KNEW THE LITTLE FELLOW HAD IT IN HIM!
YOU MEAN... ASTERIX HAS WON?
IN A WAY, OBELIX. IN A WAY!
I SHOULD NOW LIKE...
GROUIK!
THE CROWD GOES WILD WITH ENTHUSIASM, AND IT IS ON THIS NOTE...
AHA, AHA, AHA!
... THAT WE LEAVE THE LAND OF THE HELLENES. OUR FRIENDS HAVE A QUIET CRUISE HOME...
I'VE GOT THAT SINKING FEELING AGAIN...
BOM! BOM! BOM! BOM!
... TO THEIR LITTLE VILLAGE, WHERE UNDER A STARRY SKY, THEY CELEBRATE THEIR OLYMPIC VICTORY – SOMETHING THAT DOES A LOT FOR ANY NATION'S PRESTIGE.
WHAT PUZZLES ME IS THE WAY THEY DISCRIMINATE AGAINST CAULDRONS...
EAT UP, DO, OBELIX!
AS FOR THE GREEK GIRLS, MY DEAR FELLOW – ABSOLUTELY STATUESQUE!
WHERE'S YOUR PALM OF VICTORY, ASTERIX?
DON'T TELL THE OTHERS, BUT I GAVE IT TO SOMEONE WHOSE NEED WAS GREATER THAN MINE, BY TOUTATIS!
AND FOR ONCE... FOR ONCE CAESAR IS PLEASED!
LEGIONARY GLUTEUS MAXIMUS, I MAKE YOU A CENTURION! CENTURION GAIUS VERIAMBITIUS, I PROMOTE YOU TO TRIBUNE!
THE END